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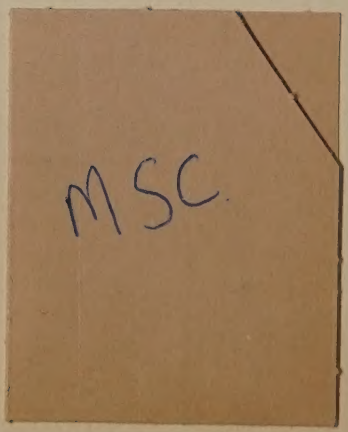

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BRADNINCH

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BRADNINCH

BEING A SHORT HISTORICAL SKETCH OF THE HONOR THE MANOR THE BOROUGH AND LIBERTIES AND THE PARISH

BY

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THIS HISTORY
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TO
His Royal Highness
EDWARD
Prince of Wales
Duke of Cornwall
Baron of Bradninch

PREFACE

BRADNINCH—never more than "a little city, and few men within it"—has been for many generations the dear home of men and women who have loved it with the peculiar love which only home evokes. And the present representatives of the old Bradninch families love Bradninch simply because it is Bradninch. Whatever things belong to it "come home to their business and bosoms." And for them, and for those who will come after them, I here unfold a round, unvarnished tale of what old Bradninch was.

In preparing the following pages for the press I have sought to glean information from all quarters in which there seemed to be any likelihood that it might be found. All the many to whom I applied, with one single exception, have placed at my disposal, with the utmost kindness and readiness, whatever they had to contribute. These friendly helpers are too numerous to be named separately. Many of them have passed away, from whom I gathered personal reminiscences no longer to be obtained from any living lips. But I beg the survivors one and all to accept my very hearty and grateful acknowledgment of their multifarious assistance, without which it would have been impossible to produce this sketch.

I am, however, under special obligation to the late Sir Maurice Holzmann, K.C.V.O., C.B., keeper of the records of the duchy of Cornwall, and to Walter Peacock, esq., his successor in office, who have given me the fullest access to documents in their custody relating to Bradninch in former times. Many of the old duchy records were lost sight of at different times, when, there being no duke of Cornwall, the duchy was merged in the crown. Some of them are in the library at the British Museum, and some are at the Record Office. I have spent many days in the MSS. room at the Museum. And I have had research made at the Record Office by Mr. W. K. Boyd, a gentleman who, quite at home among its treasures, is an adept in the art of deciphering the old writings. The references to Bradninch in both places are very numerous. It would have cost too much both in time and in money to make a thorough examination of them all, and I do not claim to have done this; I present to the reader what seemed to be of most interest in the documents perused.

For the later history the chief source of information is the written records in the keeping of the 'Bradninch town trust.' But much of the information to be found in them became intelligible only by aid of the key of local tradition, and of the oral testimony of old inhabitants who are now no longer with us. The earliest of these—whose evidence was certainly the most valuable—belonged to a family which is known to have been in Bradninch for more than six centuries. She had an instinctive sympathy with the old times; she

loved to think and talk not only of what she herself had seen as a child, but of what her excellent memory retained of what she had heard as a child. She was very intelligent, had had a good education, and expressed herself with great precision. Moreover, she had a strong sense of historic veracity. And in my frequent chats with her I never found that any cross-examination caused the sharpness of detail of her evidence to become blurred, or to lose its firm outline.

I am indebted to Miss K. Clarke for the clever photograph of a difficult subject reproduced as a frontispiece, and to Mr. Wilfred Drake for the sketches which appear on pp. 9, 111, 112, 153, 175, 185, and 194. Those facing p. 1, and on pp. 106, 202, 205, 208, 285, 294, 307, 310, 314, are the work of my wife.

I have to offer my best thanks to the Hele Paper Company for supplying the paper on which the book is printed; and also to Messrs. William Baker, John Patrick Hepburn, Thomas Squire, and Peter Warren, who formed themselves into a committee to finance its publication.

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BRADNINCH FROM THE NORTH-EAST

CHAPTER I

BRADNINCH BEFORE THE CONQUEST

THERE was a time when what we now know as Bradninch was the haunt of the bear, the beaver, the bison, the cave-lion, the elephant, the elk, the glutton, the hippopotamus, the hyena, the lemming, the leopard, the lynx, the marmot, the musk-sheep, the sabre-toothed lion, the reindeer, the rhinoceros, the urus, the wild boar, the wild horse, and the wolf.

It was also the home of a primitive race of men who dwelt in caves of the earth. Before the art of working in metals was found out, these men learned to make arrow-heads, lances, harpoons, fish-hooks, bodkins and needles, of flint and horn and bone; and by the aid of these they managed to kill the wild animals, and to dress themselves in their skins. There is no question that such men occupied this part of the land, but they are pre-historic men. They lived here before our country had become an island.

Early Inhabitants

The earliest inhabitants of these western districts of which history knows anything were called Kynesii, or Kynetes, a race of reputed cannibals. In course of time a branch of the Keltic race, known as the Goidelic, emigrating from the country which is now France, drove the Kynesii to the extreme north and west. These Goidelic Kelts were in their turn squeezed out by a later invasion of the Brythonic Kelts, an older and dominant branch of the race. It was these men who,

under the name of Britons,[1] were in possession of Devon and Cornwall when the Romans came.

The Britons

It is a great error to regard these later Britons as savages. They made rude enclosures to shelter their cattle from danger. They had two or three main roads running over hill and dale, through forest and across ford, along which the different tribes kept up communication with each other. Their language was reduced to writing. They had trade relations with the Gauls. They coined gold and silver. They trained horses, and used war-chariots, to the wheels of which they fitted scythes to mow down their enemies. When the Romans invaded their land they gave "the finest troops, and the greatest general in the world" such trouble that they secured for themselves nearly another century of practical independence of the Roman yoke. To this fine race of men belonged those who were known to the Romans as Dumnonii, or men of Dumnonia,—a latinized form of Dyfnaint, the name by which they called themselves, and which still survives in the name of our county, Devon.

Bradninch

It was the custom of the Kelts to settle down in hamlets consisting of a few rude dwellings, surrounded by small, roughly fenced, irregular enclosures. Such a hamlet, the beginning of our town, planted in what was afterwards called 'Palace Combe,'[2] was known by a name which in the course of centuries, has crystallized into Bradninch. The earliest form of the name apparently was Brae-n-es or Bra-n-es. Many suggestions have been made as to what the name

---

[1] Besides Devon and Cornwall, these Britons were in possession of South Wales, the north-west corner of North Wales, Cumberland, the south-west of what we now call Scotland, *i.e.*, Wigton, Kirkcudbright, Dumfries, and parts of Ayr; a belt of Caledonia, north of Stirling, at least the eastern parts of Ireland, as well as the islands of Anglesea and Man.—Bp. Brown, p. 32.

[2] In modern times, when the Palace had come to be forgotten, the name was corrupted into 'Pacey-combe.'

means. One of the etymological explanations suggested by Polwhele describes very well what the natural features of the place must have been in the days when, invited by the shelter of the slopes, and the abundant supply of fresh water, men first took up their abode here. He says: "It may come from Brae-inge, the meadow among the hills." It seems probable that this suggestion of Polwhele is right, and that, as a 'brae-man' is a man from among the hills, so this place was called 'Brae-inge,' the meadow among the hills. If we accept this derivation as admissible, the presence of the 'n' is easily accounted for, as closing the hiatus for the sake of euphony. In this way we get 'Brae-n-ing.' The 'Brae,' together with the euphonic 'n,' at first pronounced 'Braen'[1] came before the Conquest to be pronounced 'Bran.' The 'ing,' according to the custom of the south of England, as distinguished from the speech of the north which made it 'ing' (to rhyme with sing), was pronounced 'inge' (to rhyme with singe), a termination very liable to be slurred into a mere sibilant 'sh.' We thus arrive at a sound which it is not easy to distinguish from the local pronunciation of the name to-day. But what are we to say about the 'd'? How did it find its way into the name? An answer to this question suggests itself, I think, very naturally from a consideration of the circumstances of the case. It is in the "Domesday Survey" that the 'd' first occurs, and we are told expressly that in the earlier forms it was not present. We know that in the speech of the Northmen the 'd' is not sounded. Go to Norway to-day, and you will find, for instance, that the thin cake—the bread of the country—is called 'fla bro,' though it is spelt 'flad brod' (flat bread). We know also that, in making the "Survey," much the greater part of the writing was done by Northmen. And as it is accepted[2] that the man who first

[1] Corrupted into 'Brain.'

[2] *Anal. of Exon. Domesday*, p. 50.

committed the results of the inquiry about this place to writing was a Northman, the difficulty vanishes. To the question, 'What is the name of this place?' the answer would probably have sounded something like 'Brannesh.' And the Northman, habitually accustomed to write a 'd' that did not sound, turning the name at the same time into Latin, would quite naturally have written it down, as we find it in the "Survey," 'Bradenesa,' thus unintentionally stereotyping for all time a new form of the name, which he was not even aware that he had produced. This account of the name is, after all, no more than a conjecture. But of all the suggested derivations with which I have met, this alone seems to deserve serious attention.

Polwhele's alternative venture into the field of etymology certainly leads him astray. He says:—

"It is called in 'Domesday' Bradenese, possibly from 'bre,' a hill, and 'ness,' which signifies, in British, a projecting piece of land."

Imagination might, indeed, see some correspondence between the name and the lie of the place, in the sloping ridge which projects from the top of Beacon to Park, and strikes through the highest part of the modern town. But such an explanation puts 'the cart before the horse.' The Bradninch which first acquired a local habitation and a name was not perched upon the ridge. It lay in the combe at the foot of it.

It is impossible to fix the date of this settlement. But there is strong evidence to show that, before the Saxons came, Bradninch had already enlarged its borders. One street of the town is to this day called Hên Street. The very name, Hên Street, which is the British for Old Street, implies that a new street had come into existence in the British times. This new street was probably only an extension of Hên Street down the lower reach of the same combe, where Parsonage Road now runs. But the houses may also have extended towards Cullompton Hill. Around

Hên Street

this collection of human habitations, there were, no doubt, here and there, as the lie of the land invited, some small clearings in the forest where oxen dragged the plough. It is not likely that British Bradninch ever stretched beyond these narrow limits. It is true, indeed, that old writers talk vaguely of its early importance. But importance is only a relative term. If we measure the place by the standard of the large agricultural village so common in the Eastern Midlands—a type which only found its way into England with the English themselves—it is unimportant. But if we compare it, as no doubt the inhabitants did, not with something unknown to them, but with the smaller British settlements around them, there is no exaggeration in speaking of the Bradninch of those early days as a place of real importance. We are unable to form even a rough estimate of the number of persons who dwelt in this old British settlement of Bra-nes. When the Saxons came the population distributed over the whole land was probably not more than a million—less than one-fifth of the number residing to-day within the limits of the metropolitan and city police districts of London. Even if we suppose that our town had in those primitive times more than its fair share of the total number of the ancient Britons, its inhabitants all told must have been but few. Yet when we remember that Bra-n-es had grown, and comprised at least two streets, we cannot be wrong in supposing that, compared with other places, it was a considerable settlement.

The Saxons

A new chapter in the history of the making of Bradninch opens with the coming of the Saxons. These new invaders were immigrants from that part of North Germany which is marked on our maps as Holstein and Mecklenburg-Schwerin. Far removed from the centre of the Roman Empire, they had succeeded in retaining their independence, and with their independence very much of their ancient barbarism. They were, however, of the same race as the

tribes which came into direct contact with the Romans. And the account of the Germans generally which the Roman historian has handed down, applies, no doubt, in great measure to our Teutonic forefathers.

Tacitus tells us that the stock from which these new invaders sprung was a race of men unmixed by intermarriages with other nations. As a result there prevailed among them a great sameness of physical characteristics, stern, dark-blue eyes, red hair, and massive, unwieldy bodies.[1] Their sole delight and riches consisted in the number of their herds.[2] They chose their leaders for their valour, and were accustomed to stimulate themselves to doughty deeds by marching to war shoulder to shoulder with their own kith and kin.[3] They offered sacrifices—sometimes human sacrifices—to the gods whom they worshipped. But they made no images of these gods.[4] They held their councils on the days of the new moon, and of the full moon, as being the most auspicious seasons for entering upon a new enterprise. When the priests had ordered silence, the king or chief man addressed the assembly. If what he said was displeasing, they made their dissent known by a murmur. If it pleased them, they struck their spears together.[5] At these councils men were put on trial for their lives, and different punishments were meted out according to the nature of the offence. Traitors or deserters were hanged to a tree. The sluggard, the coward, the shameless profligate, was cast into a filthy pond, a hurdle was thrown upon him, and he was drowned, the difference of punishment being intended to show that, whereas crimes of wickedness should be exposed to view, those of shame should be hidden from sight. These men did not dwell in cities, nor indeed did their homes ever adjoin one another. They made their dwellings apart, as the supply of water, land, and wood pleased them.[6]

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[1] *Ger.*, Cap. 4. [2] *Ib.* Cap. 5. [3] *Ib.* Cap. 7.
[4] *Ib.* Cap. 9. [5] *Ib.* Cap. 11. [6] *Ib.* Cap. 16.

They were distinguished from the rest of the world outside the Roman Empire, in that they contented themselves each with a single wife. They discussed questions of public interest over the festal board, assigning as their reason for the practice the fact that conviviality opens the door of the heart, and lets the real truth—the prisoner bound within—come forth. But no decision was come to at the close of these debates. They thought it wiser to sleep upon their deliberations, and the vote was taken the next day.

Of such stuff were the pagan invaders made who began to arrive in England about the middle of the fifth century. Their conquest of the land was slow, and more than two hundred years had rolled away before they had won the mastery in the eastern half of the island. When they first set foot on land, they gave everything to fire and sword. The result was that they met with fierce resistance. They had not established their sway as far west as Honiton in 577. In the seventh century they became Christian. And with the change in their religion came a change in their policy and action. Henceforth they settled themselves among the old Kelts. They adopted their Keltic name, and called themselves Defenas, *i.e.* 'men of Dyfnaint' or Devon. From this settlement of the Saxons among the Kelts arose the mixed race which now inhabits Devon.

We are not able to fix the date at which the Saxons reached Bradninch. There is reason to believe that they made their way to us through Somerset, probably towards the close of the seventh, or the beginning of the eighth century. Their coming led to a further enlargement of the town. And, as in the name of Hên Street, we have a reminiscence of its British growth, so in the name of New Haven we have a monument of Saxon progress and ascendancy. The new comers found the old town of the British too small for them. And, looking for a place to hold the additional homes they needed, they selected the little

New Haven

combe that lies between the church and Castle Hill. Here they built their new town, and called it in their own tongue, 'Neu Haben.'[1] This Saxon expansion did not follow the line of the modern main street up the hill. It followed the gentle declivity of the little sheltered combe that curves with an easy rise round the north and west of the old churchyard.

Under the Saxons Bradninch grew and flourished. Under them, as afterwards in Norman times, it became "a most important centre, forming one of the fifteen fortresses which guarded the inland passes, and vulnerable points; the others being Exeter, Totnes, Plympton, Trematon, Barnstaple, Launceston, Okehampton, Tiverton, Berry, Lydford, Torrington, Bampton, Winkleigh, and Gidleigh."[2]

The fortress[3] at Bradninch consisted of a wooden castle rising from a mound protected by earthen dykes

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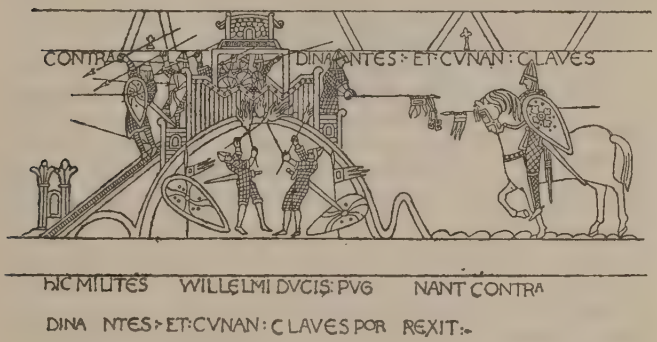
[1] "Haben, that which holds or contains." The word is derived from the Eur-Aryan root QEP, signifying *to contain*, *to hold*, *to take*, through the Anglo-Saxon *hæfene*. (*See* Archdeacon BALY'S *Eur-Aryan Roots*, Vol. I.) As a haven of the sea is that which holds, or contains, or takes ships, so a haven of the land was that which held, contained, or took dwelling-houses.

[2] The quotation has been kindly supplied to me by the Rev. Roger Granville, Sub-Dean of Exeter Cathedral, who met with it in the course of his researches into the history of his own family. Unfortunately he has forgotten the source of it. When the old chronicler speaks of Bradninch as "a most important centre," we must once more be on our guard against thinking of it as a populous town. For, three centuries later, the number of its inhabitants was still very modest. *See* Chap. III.

[3] I am indebted to my friend the Rev. Joseph Heald Ward, late Rector of Silverton, for much that is interesting about these eleventh century castles. Many of them are supposed to be of British date. They were enclosures of different forms,—circular, elliptical, and irregular. Buildings of wood seem to have been erected within their lines. Downton Castle (castellum quod Dovntona dicitur), near Salisbury, built by Henri de Blois in 1138, was one of these wooden fortresses. It is described as "castellum escarum copiis uberime refertum et apparatu apprime promunitum." (H. WHARTON'S *Anglia Sacra*, 2 vols. folio, 1691.) The mound on which it stood still remains on the 'Moot Hill.' But there are no vestiges

and ramparts. It stood on the southern slope of the hill looking down upon New Haven, in the field which, to this day, retains the name of Castle Hill. The representation of it in the frontispiece is suggested by the castle of Dinan, as seen in the Bayeux tapestry:—



In addition to the monuments of bygone times which still survive in the names of "Bradninch," "Hên Street,"

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of any castle, or of stonework of any kind. The ground plan of a similar castle may still be traced at Langton, Yorkshire.

"William's troops landed at Pevensey 28th September, 1066. The archers landed first: they wore short habits, and had their hair shaven off. The cavaliers landed next, clad in coats of mail, and wearing helmets of polished iron, nearly of a conical make. After them came the workmen of the army—pioneers, carpenters, and smiths—who unloaded on the shore, piece by piece, three wooden castles, framed, and prepared beforehand. The duke came ashore last of all."—THIERRY'S *History of the Norman Conquest*, English Ed., 1841, p. 66.

"The exploits of the last hero of Anglo-Saxon independence formed a favourite theme of traditions and poetry; and long after his death the inhabitants of the Isle of Ely showed with pride the ruins of a wooden tower, which they called the Castle of Hereward." (Quod usque in hodiernum diem Castellum Herewardi comprovincialibus nuncupatur.)—MATH. PARIS, I., 7.

A paper by DANIEL HAIGH, in the *Brit. Arch. Journal*, 1844, p. 401, supplies much valuable information on this subject.

and "New Haven," we have three other links with the distant past in the name of our highest hill-top, "Christ Cross," in the name of "S. Disen," the founder of our parish church, and in the old granite cross that stands in our churchyard. These belong to Christian times. What account is to be given of them? To answer this question we must go outside Bradninch, and inquire when the Britons learned Christianity.

Christianity introduced

As a matter of unassailable history, we find an independent British Church in existence at the opening of the fourth century. When, in A.D. 314, representatives from all parts of Christendom were summoned to the Great Council of Arles, to uphold the truth against the heresy of the Donatists, the British Church sent Eborius, bishop of York, Restitutus, bishop of London, and Adelfius, bishop of Colonia Lodinensium, probably Caerleon, together with a priest and a deacon. The presence of these bishops at the Council of Arles is conclusive proof that British Christianity was already an organized power, recognised throughout the Christian world. Such a position could not have been won in a day. The seed of the Divine Society must have been sown in our land many years—nay, generations—before it could have grown into so great a tree.

We must set aside, as legendary stories incapable of proof, the several accounts which assign its introduction among the Britons to St. Paul, to Joseph of Arimathea, or to the consecration of native bishops by Eleutherius, bishop of Rome, at the instance of Lucius, a king of the Britons in the second century. It is not known, and it is unlikely that it ever will be known, how Christianity first reached our land. I think we very generally fail to realize what various channels there were, through which it may—I had almost said must—have found its way to our shores. We know that, at a very early date, even in the days of the Apostles, it was widely spread throughout the Roman Empire. S. Paul himself tells

us that it was "in all the world bearing fruit and increasing."[1]

It is quite possible that it may not have been through the labours of any one great missionary that Christianity first reached Britain. Cæsar's descent upon the island, fifty-five years before the birth of Christ, had opened up permanent communication between the Britons and the Roman world. And even before the Romans came to stay in the land, many of the leading Britons had visited Rome, and begun to adopt Roman civilization. When, at length, the Romans had with difficulty established themselves as masters of the southern portion of the island, they at once put their usual policy into practice. Having beaten down in war the pride of the resister, they spared the subject. They opened up his country by a system of noble roads, some of which are still in use, and take rank amongst the foremost modern highways. They taught him all their arts—architecture, agriculture, mining, manufacture, and commerce. He, on his part, was not slow to learn. And the better class of Britons spoke Latin, dressed and lived like Romans, and intermarried with their conquerors. The natives of the land were Romanized; and for 350 years—a period as long as from the accession of Elizabeth to the present day—our country was a province of the Roman Empire.

This being so, the Roman military system must have played an active part in propagating the Christian faith. Under their system the legions remained permanently quartered for long periods, sometimes for centuries, in the same province. The men who composed it were always drawn from a nation other than that in which it was stationed.[2] The legionaries lived and died, married and brought up families, without ever changing from

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[1] *Col.* i. 6.

[2] An inscription in the language of Palmyra has been discovered at South Shields. And British soldiers were found in Pamphylia.—*See* STOKES, *Ireland and the Celtic Church*, p. 8.

one military station to another. And it puts too great a strain upon the historical imagination, to suppose that among all the foreign immigrants, by whom the three legions in Britain were recruited, there were no Christians. We cannot imagine that the connexion between Christianity and the Roman army ended, as it began, with the "centurion of the Italian band." History tells us that Pomponia Græcina, wife of Alius Plautius, the Roman general who was the real conqueror of Britain, was a Christian. The most trusted soldiers of Constantius (250-306), whose favourite place of residence was York, were Christians. In his lectures at Dublin University, in 1885, my old friend, the late professor Stokes, gave a striking illustration of the active force of such an influence as the Roman army must have exercised. He said: "One hundred and twenty years ago communication between England and America was much slower and more dangerous than between Rome and London in the reign of the Antonines. Yet within thirty years of the foundation of the Methodist Society by John Wesley, a few soldiers in a marching regiment founded a Methodist Society at New York, about the year 1765, which has grown so rapidly as to have now become the most powerful and numerous religious community in America."[1] Can we imagine that the religious zeal of the Christians of the second century glowed with a less fervent flame than that of Wesley's disciples in the eighteenth?

And there was yet another advance in civilization which was to become a mighty agent for the general spread of Christianity throughout the known world. We are apt to underrate the rapid growth of facilities of communication under the Roman sway. It is but an instance of this when we read that Constantine the Great once travelled by public conveyance from the city of Nicomedia in Asia Minor, without drawing rein, till he

[1] *Ireland and the Celtic Church*, 2nd ed., p. 9.

alighted at Boulogne on the shores of the English Channel.

When we fully realize all this, and remember to what an extent Christianity had become rooted in Roman society even in the days of the Apostles, and with what untiring vigour it propagated itself from man to man wherever Christians went, we cannot help feeling, that—apart from all question of formal missionary effort—a thousand channels were open, through which a knowledge of Christianity must have found its way into this country at a very early date. This reasonable inference is confirmed by historic testimony. Eusebius, the historian of the early Church, writing about A.D. 315, of the propagation of the Gospel in the first ages, says expressly that some "bearers of the glad tidings passed over the ocean to those which are called the British Isles." Before him Origen testifies to "the power of the Saviour being felt in Britain," although very many in that land had "not yet heard the word of the Gospel." Even within 180 years from the Resurrection of our Lord, Tertullian spoke of districts of Britain "inaccessible to the Romans" being then "subdued to Christ."

This inference from the general facts of history, and this specific testimony of different writers, are quite independent of one another. And each supports and corroborates what the other declares. The testimony goes to shew that the inference is in accord with what has been handed down. And the inference goes to shew that what has been handed down is what was to have been reasonably expected. It may therefore, I think, be taken to be an ascertained historic fact, that Christianity had fixed its roots in the soil of British life in very early times.

Christ Cross

It is reasonable to believe that Devonshire, intersected as it was by a great Roman road, must have been among the earliest parts of the land to hear the glad tidings of salvation. And we have in the parish of Bradninch the monument of its first acceptance in this part of the country. This monument

is not of stone. It is a name, given by our early forefathers to the summit of our highest hill—Christ Cross.

From the earliest times it has been the use of many tribes of men to regard the hills as "the homes or haunts of the gods." Feeling themselves nearer to heaven on the tops of the mountains, they built their sanctuaries in the "high places." Even the Hebrew psalmist was fain, in his devotion, to lift up his "eyes unto the hills."[1] The heathen regarded his temple as a mysterious stair, to lead the worshipper toward heaven. Socrates wished temples to be built in lofty places, in order that man should be reminded, by the very effort of climbing to them, that it is only by mounting upward that his spirit can draw near to God. In the same spirit, the Christian was accustomed, when he won a new country for Christ, to mark his triumph by planting the sacred emblem of his faith on the site of the pagan temple. We should bear in mind that from the first ages, for 1,500 years, no Christian was anywhere found to be ashamed, or afraid of the Cross. On the contrary, all were enthusiastically attached to its use, as the visible sign and symbol of their faith. It glows in the pages of Justin Martyr.[2] It was rudely drawn on the walls of the catacombs. It was the device on the warrior's banner, the theme of all decorative art, and the crown of every building set apart for worship.

The planting of the Cross on our highest hill must have taken place not later than the third, possibly in the second century. We are not, however, to suppose that from that time forward Christianity was the common faith of all the people, or that heathenism was wholly banished. The grain of mustard seed had been sown, and it was growing. The leaven had been hidden in the lump, and the leavening had begun. But heathenism lingered on persistently for many centuries. Seven centuries after the acceptance of Christianity many pagan

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[1] *Ps.* cxxi. 1. [2] *Apol.* i. 72.

superstitions still survived among the people. We learn from the "Canons of Edgar" (959-75) that it was still necessary to enjoin upon the priest, as part of his duty, that he should

> "diligently promote Christianity, and banish heathenism, and forbid well-worship, necromancy, augury, man-worship, incantations, and many things which they practise with various spells, and 'frith-splottum,' [probably spots of ground accounted sacred,] and wish-elms, and various trees and stones, and other phantasms by which many are deceived, and that devil's craft whereby children are drawn through the earth, and the merriment that men make on the night of the new year."[1]

Indeed pagan superstition has opposed such a force of passive resistance to the truth of the Gospel that it is not wholly impossible to discover lingering traces of some of these pagan practices even at the present day.[2]

Again, we are not to suppose that from the first dawn of Christianity in England Bradninch had a church, and a resident priest to minister in it. These

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[1] CUTTS, *Par. Pr.*, p. 68.

[2] "One very common custom, still maintained, of passing a child afflicted with congenital hernia through a split ash tree, has to be performed on a Sunday morning, at, or just before sunrise. The opening must be made in the direction of east and west, for the child must be passed through it towards the rising sun."—*Proceed. Somerset Arch. and Nat. Hist. Soc.*, Vol. XXXVIII., p. 362, 1892.

"A young ash tree was split vertically, and the parts being drawn forcibly asunder, the child was passed 'three times three times' against the sun through the tree. This ceremony having been performed, the tree was carefully bound together. If the bark grew together, and the tree survived, the child would grow healthy and strong. If the tree died, the death of the child, it was believed, would surely follow."—HUNT'S *Romances and Drolls of the West of England*, p. 415.

The Bath and Wells Diocesan Magazine for December, 1886, p. 178, gives an instance of all this having been duly performed, "on a recent Sunday morning" at Athelney. About the same time the same superstitious rite was practised by a small farmer close to the Wellington Monument. The ash tree used on this occasion has been placed in the Museum at Taunton.

things are the outcome of the slow growth of ages. In the time of the apostles the Christians used to meet together for worship in private houses.[1] The Church, Christ's body, was accustomed to offer to God its common worship wherever its members were gathered together,[2] whether in field, or desert, or ship, or inn, or gaol, or tomb. In times of persecution they met for worship and for instruction in Christian doctrine under ground, in the catacombs. They had independent buildings set apart for divine worship as early as the third century. At that date, however, these were few, and even the most important of them were structures of a slight and unenduring kind.[3] In England, as we learn from Bede, stone churches were unusual among the Britons.[4] Indeed, in all probability, churches of any kind were then to be found only in the larger centres of population. For a long time also the country places had no resident priest. Up to the middle of the fifth century the clergy lived in community with the bishop, who sent them forth to instruct the people—to preach, and to administer the sacraments to them. Even as late as the close of the seventh century, those who did not dwell in large towns were to a great extent dependent on the services of itinerant teachers, who were warmly welcomed, and hospitably entertained, by the chief men of the places which they visited. In the ninth decade of that century one of these priests went to Crediton, and there received hospitality at the house of the father of him who is known to all the world as Boniface, the apostle of Germany.

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[1] *Acts* ii. 46; xx. 9; *Rom.* xvi. 5; 1 *Cor.* xvi. 9.

[2] EUSEB. *Eccles. Hist.*, v., 22.

[3] LACTANTIUS, *De Mortibus Persecutorum*, C. 12. The famous church of Nicomedia was levelled to the ground by the Pretorian guard in a few hours.

[4] G. G. SCOTT, *Essay*, p. 44, note. Remains of a church built by the Romans, after their manner, of substantial materials, have been brought to light at Silchester in Hampshire.

In the same manner, it was from such itinerating priests, honoured and welcomed guests, that the early Christian people of Bradninch received the ministrations of the Church. The good news was preached, and the sacraments ordained by Christ were administered in the open air. In the first half of the seventh century there came to them from Ireland, at that time the home of learning and the cradle of saints, a man whose name was Disen. Setting out as a missionary to Germany, he broke his journey—as was then usual—in Cornwall. Thence he made a circuit, and came to Bradninch. Of the details of his visit we know nothing. It is impossible to say whether he found the people meeting for public worship around the granite cross in the open air, or in a building unsuitable for the purpose. But there can be no doubt that the result of his visit was the erection of a wooden church—the first church of S. Disen—on the site where S. Disen's church stands to-day. Curiously enough, the memory of the founder of our church was for a time locally lost, his name being mistaken for that of another. Since the appearance of Miss Arnold-Forster's *Studies in Church Dedications*, we have been recalled to our allegiance. One or two generations had grown up at Bradninch which seem never to have heard the name of Disen. For them, S. Denys, or more properly, Dionysius, was the patron saint. But while this was so here in Devonshire, the older books of reference, which are the common property of Englishmen everywhere, declared our church to be dedicated to S. Disen. Before Miss Arnold-Forster's book was published I had frequently received through the post official letters and circulars addressed to "Vicar of S. Disen's, Bradninch." I had never heard the name of S. Disen, and I supposed the address to be due to a printer's error in some directory, until I read what Miss Arnold-Forster says on the subject. She writes:

S. Disen

> "The roll of Irish immigrants closes with a saint, who, though not specially interesting in his own person, is particularly welcome as furnishing a solitary representative of a most interesting class of Irish Continental missionaries. S. Gall, S. Columban, S. Fridian, and others are gratefully remembered in Italy and Switzerland, but have left no trace in England. This is hardly surprising, for if they came into England at all, it must have been as mere birds of passage. Information of all kinds relating to S. Disen is singularly meagre, and there is no direct statement to the effect that he was ever in England: but Cornwall was such a convenient halfway house for Welsh and Irish travellers journeying to central Europe by way of Brittany, that his presence in these parts does not demand much explanation. Strictly speaking, it is not in Cornwall that he is commemorated, but in the Devonshire parish of Bradninch, near Exeter. . . .
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> "It is quite possible, then, that the Irish S. Disen may have sojourned at Bradninch for a sufficient length of time to have there founded a church, which should hereafter keep his name. Such Christian activity is in accordance with what little we do know of Bishop Disibod (this seems to be the more correct form of his name), for we are told that while still living in Ireland, before he began his foreign missionary work, 'he wrought hard at the overthrow of rites of unspeakable wickedness.' . . .
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> "After itinerating for some time in Germany, S. Disibod settled near Maintz, and founded, on a hillside overlooking a tributary of the Rhine, a monastery which was first called 'Mons Disibodi,' and afterwards Germanized into its present form of 'Disibodenberg.' Here he reproduced the organization so familiar to him in his Irish home, and lived as an Abbot-Bishop, 'without jurisdiction beyond his own monastery,' ruling over his canons, twelve in number, after the likeness of the Apostolic band. He never returned to Ireland, but lived on in his German monastery till he was past eighty. After S. Disen's time the monastery was considerably enlarged, and its extensive ruins may still be seen."

Which then of the two saints, S. Disen or S. Dionysius, to whom the dedication has been variously ascribed, is our true patron? It is a problem to be solved by applying the principle that underlies the canon of textual criticism, according to which, in cases of doubt, the more difficult reading is to be preferred to the more

obvious. It is much more likely that the name of the popular S. Denys came to be substituted for that of the unknown S. Disen, than that the strange name of Disen ever succeeded in supplanting the familiar name of Denys. This conclusion is confirmed by the fact that it was characteristic of British Christianity to adopt as patrons for its churches, not departed saints, but the living men who founded them.

The selection of the site upon which the Church stands, itself supplies evidence that the choice must have been made at a very early date. It may be taken as a rule that, unless there was some overmastering natural impediment, the churches of early times were built on higher ground than the surrounding dwellings. If, when the first church was built, the town had already grown higher up the hill than Church Lane, there can be little doubt that a site would have been selected for it somewhere on the ridge which now forms the highest part of the town. The houses from Church Lane to Hên Street conceal the natural contour of the ground. But if you look at the Church from the bottom of Hên Street, or from the garden of Challice House, or from the lower part of Parsonage Road, you see at once how all the lower town looked up to it, and how it crowned the natural platform which dominated the whole settlement. As S. Disen died, an octogenarian, in 674,[1] we cannot be far astray if we place the building of his Church in the first half of the seventh century.

The Churchyard Cross

But the oldest memorial of a material nature that survives among us is the churchyard Cross. We know that to our Saxon forefathers the Cross served often instead of a church. A Saxon lady—the earliest English authoress whose writings have come down to us—writing in the eighth century, tells us that it "is the custom of the

[1] S. Disen's Day, according to Hrabanus Maurus, the highest authority, is the 8th of September.

Saxon nation, that on some estates of the noble and good they have commonly not a church, but the emblem of the Holy Cross dedicated to the Lord, held in great honour, and erected in a lofty place, to be frequented for the purpose of daily prayer."[1] I do not pretend to fix the date of our old cross. It may not be—very probably it is not—the first cross that was planted on the site. But, if it be not the original, it must be at least an early representative of a cross planted there at a time when, relatively to the settlement as it then was, the site was still high ground. In the course of ages the upper part of the old cross disappeared. Nothing remained but the base supporting the rough octagonal granite shaft, seven feet in height. Mr. Henry Matthews in 1851 placed a new head upon the old shaft. This act of pious care for our most precious relic of the past awoke the foolish fanaticism of a few ignorant men in the place. Not knowing that the cross had come down to us from a time when the bishop of Rome had not yet gained a footing in our land, they raised the unmeaning cry of "No popery!" and one dark night carried away the new head of the cross. Some months afterwards it was discovered at the bottom of the Manor House pond, all bedaubed with tar. Some one sagaciously suggested that the best way to clean it was to burn the tar out. But the result of the experiment was so disastrous that the services of a stone-mason were called in "to chip the cross." It was duly chipped. And then it was found to be too small in diameter to fit the ancient shaft. These wise men of Gotham were, however, equal to the occasion. They chiselled down the fine old shaft to make it fit the re-cut head. And thus it came to pass that this, the most venerable relic of antiquity which we possess, looks to-day, except for the weathering of the base, as if it had been fresh hewn from the quarry.

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[1] *Dev. Ass. Rep.*, Vol. xxii., p. 214.

The Clergy

By the time the Normans came upon the scene, Bradninch no longer depended upon the casual ministrations of a travelling clergy. It had for some time enjoyed the services of a resident priest, in later times probably of more than one; for it became common for several to live and work together in a parish.[1] The clergy were, as a body, religious, learned, capable men, and usually men of good family. But whether by birth nobles, or, as they somewere, serfs, the law assigned to them as priests the rank of a thane.[2]

Church Services

Although there are no records extant to give us the names of the rectors of Bradninch in those early days, we know that seven times a day the church bell rang, and the priest with the inferior clergy met in God's house for prayer and praise; for *Uhtsang*, about 4 a.m., for *Primsang*, at 6 a.m., for *Undersang*, at 9 a.m., for *Middaysang*, at noon, for *Nonsang*, at 3 p.m., for *Æfensang*, and for *Nightsang*. We know that three times every sunday and holy day the people came to church; that having 'assisted' at the divine service in a language unknown to them, they had the Lord's Prayer, the Creed, and the Gospel for the day explained to them in English; that it was the duty of the priest to "preach every Sunday, and well explain."[3]

Even to the present day, among many who have no historical knowledge, there prevails the belief that up to the Reformation the Church of England was wholly subject to the dominion of Rome, and saturated with the modern errors of that church. There could be no greater mistake than this. The clergy were expressly taught to yield to the canons of the first four councils—before the errors of later times had crept in—a reverence

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[1] Cutts, *Par. Pr.*, p. 111. [2] *Ib.*, p. 128.
[3] *Canons of Edgar*, (959-975).

of the kind which they gave to the four evangelists. The teaching given in S. Disen's Church more than nine hundred years ago was accordingly free from later corruptions. The following, for instance, are the precise words in which the clergy of the day were taught to expound the sacrament of the Lord's Supper:—

> "The housel[1] is Christ's body, not bodily but spiritually, not the body in which He suffered, but the body about which He spake, when He blessed bread and wine for housel. . . . Understand now that the Lord Who could before His passion change the bread to His body, and the wine to His blood spiritually, that the Same daily blesses, by the hands of His priests, the bread and wine to His spiritual body and blood."[2]

Those who know what the Romish doctrine of Transubstantiation is, will see at once how entirely this teaching of our own Church in Saxon times contradicts it. And as to our being subject to the dominion of Rome, all the broad facts of history shew that in Saxon times the Church of England determinately rejected the claims of the bishop of Rome to our allegiance.

The People

There is a document[3] in existence, dating from about the tenth century, which sets out the Laws of Landright as they affect the several classes of persons among the Saxons. From it we learn what services were due from each of them.

The thane, or hláford, or lord,[4] as we call him, owed certain services to the king for his estate. It was his

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[1] *I.e.*, the Holy Eucharist.

[2] *A canon*, of the end of the tenth century, quoted by CUTTS, *Par. Pr.*, p. 75,

[3] *Rectitudines Singularum Personarum*, quoted by LAPPENBERG and HONE.

[4] SKEAT says, "It is certain that the word is a compound, and that the former syllable is A. S. *hláf*. a loaf. It is extremely likely that *-ord* stands for *weard*, a warden, keeper, master; whence hláf-weard = loaf-keeper, *i.e.*, the master of the house, father of the family."

duty to attend him on horseback, and to take the field with him when called upon to do so; to take his part in the building of castles, and to keep up the bridges on the estate. The lord retained in his own hand a part of the estate which was called the 'inland.' The rest he let to tenants.

The tenants of larger holdings were called geburs. The gebur had "given to him for his outfit, two oxen, and one cow, and six sheep, and seven acres sown on his yard land." He had also given to him tools for his work and utensils for his house. But these things reverted to the lord on the death of the gebur. The services which the gebur rendered to his lord in return for the use of his portion of the yard land, and of his outfit, depended largely on the old local customs that had been handed down, and were not the same on all estates. But as our princes have ever been, time out of mind, good landlords—although their agents may have sometimes been hard men—we like to believe that the gebur of Bran-es was not loaded with over-heavy burdens. The nature of the service which he rendered to his lord a hundred years before the Norman conquest, may be gathered from what this old document tells us:—

> "On some lands he must work at week-work two days, at such work as he is required, through the year every week, and at harvest three days for week-work, and from Candlemas to Easter three . . . and from the time that they first plough to Martinmas he shall each week plough one acre, and prepare himself the seed in the lord's barn. Also three acres bene work and two grass-yrth.[1] . . . On some lands he shall pay honey gafol, on some meat gafol, on some ale gafol."[2]

Besides the geburs there was another class of tenants, holders of plots of five acres, who were called, from the

[1] HONE, *The Manor*, p. 10. The service of grass-erth, or grass-yrth, was in return for the privilege of feeding cattle in the lord's open pasture.

[2] Gafol = tax.

cots in which they dwelt, cottiers. The service of the cottiers also varied according to the custom of the estate :—

> "He shall do what on the land is fixed. On some he shall, each Monday in the year, work for his lord, and three days a week in harvest. . . . He pays hearth-penny on Holy Thursday, and Kirkshot at Martinmas.[1]

In addition to these classes of free tenants, which comprised the native Britons as well as the Saxons, there were also in Bran-es a small number of men in a servile condition called theows, or serfs.[2] "The master had the right of selling a theow in the country, but not beyond the sea, even if he had perpetrated a crime. In other respects the condition of the servile seems to have differed little from that of the indigent free."[3]

Such were the inhabitants of Bradninch in the days before the Normans came. Great and small they have all passed away, and their very names have been forgotton for centuries. But enough has been preserved from the wreck of those bygone ages to enable us to sketch in fancy a true picture of many scenes in their daily life. The men are everywhere busied in their most important occupation, the rearing and tending of cattle; the gebur is driving his own beasts, together with those of his lord, to graze on the common pasture; women are milking ewes in the pinfold, and carrying home the milk in pails balanced on their heads; men and women together are shearing on midsummer day the coats of patient sheep, to be sent out to the Low Countries and the Rhineland, there to be spun and

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[1] HONE, *The Manor*, p. 10.

[2] In Devon there was one serf to five freemen. The unfree or servile population of the whole land numbered little above twenty-five thousand. The majority were slaves by birth, descended from Roman slaves, or British prisoners of war, or other enemies. Others had been reduced to the servile condition by sentence of law.

[3] LAPPENBERG, *England under the A. S. Kings*, Vol. II. p. 321.

woven, and finally brought back to England in the form of cloth; the skinner is preparing the hides of animals to be converted into shoes, and breeches, and strong rough gloves; the beo-ceorl, or bee-master, is tending the bees in the hives that line the sheltered sunny slopes of Palace Combe and New Haven; one swine-herd is herding his master's swine, and receiving six loaves in payment, while his more enterprising brother provides a horse for the lord's service, and pays him an annual rent of "ten swine and five pigs" for the right to feed his own herd on the acorns and beech-masts of the forests which covered the country[1]; the cultivated fields are smiling with their crops of rye, barley, wheat, and oats—enough to feed all the inhabitants of the land without having recourse to distant countries; the hawking foreign merchant who, before he was permitted to land, had been obliged to expose his wares, and to pay duty upon them, is driving a bargain in dumb show with a New Haven house-wife, who, though she does not understand his tongue, yet shrewdly fears that he wants too much of her wool[2] in exchange for the article which she wishes to buy; while a startling contrast to the peaceful scene presents itself, as a poor maimed creature slowly crawls down the street, unable to stand, unable to feed himself, his hands and feet lopt off to punish him for stealing.

If some wizard skill could shew us the past as it was in fact, all these would find their place in the various scenes presented to us by the daily life of the inhabitants of Bradninch in Saxon times.

This chapter in the early history of Bradninch is happily

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[1] The worth of a tree was reckoned according to the number of swine that could stand under it.

[2] Coined money was scarce. A large part of the business of the country was carried on by means of written contracts. Payment for their wares was made to these wandering pedlars in wool, the staple export commodity.

Summary

summed up in the allegorical window from S. Disen's Hall, represented in the frontispiece. In design the window purports to present a bird's-eye view, not of the town at any particular date, but of its growth through many centuries; from the time when it was a cluster of wattled British huts, to the time when it had become a prosperous town surmounted by a Norman castle, and garrisoned by Norman soldiers. The treatment of the design recalls the quaint plans, half map, half picture, affected by sixteenth century draughtsmen. Full of intentional anachronisms, the window presents to the eye the successive stages of the town's development. It begins on the right with Hên Street, the first abode of the British in the sheltered and well watered 'meadow among the hills.' The central light shews in the foreground how the new British town stretched eastwards towards the Culm. Above this comes first the New Haven of the Saxons, along the little beck that flowed on the north side of the church, and then the later buildings that lined the lane leading to the church. There for all to see stood the pillory and the stocks. The whole is dominated by the wooden Norman castle within its stockades and earthworks. In the cartouche at the bottom of the light on the left is shewn the "Maunsion of the Baron of Bra-n-es vulgarly yclept the Castle of Exon," a beautiful copy of a drawing of Exeter Castle in the sixteenth century from Hooker's *History of Exeter*. Far away to the left, by a free exercise of the artist's license, a colossal 'Christ Cross' crowns the horizon, while in the centre of the picture, beside the old cross, stands the thatched church, not the wooden church erected by S. Disen, but the second foundation raised in Norman times.

CHAPTER II

THE HONOR OR BARONY

OUR picture of Bradninch up to this point is taken from a somewhat blurred, yet easily legible, local outline. It is filled in by inference from the general data of wider history. Henceforth it begins to be drawn from specific written documents. No longer a more or less shadowy impression it now becomes in large measure a reproduction of local annals.

At the outset let it be clearly understood that the name Bradninch is applied to at least four distinct things,—the honor, the manor, the borough, and the parish. The name Bran-es, first given, as we have seen, to the British settlement, passed on to the larger group of dwellings that grew out of the settlement; and, from the group of dwellings, passed over to the land that surrounded them. The group of dwellings became the borough of Bradninch, and the surrounding land became the manor of Bradninch, and when William the Conqueror constituted the honor or barony, of which it was a part, the manor in turn handed over the name, and the honor was called the honor or barony of Bradninch. The parish is the ecclesiastical division which embraced the manor and the borough.

The name Bradninch stands for different things

In the British Museum is a manuscript entitled *Synopsis Chorographical of Devonshire*, written by John Hooker, the historian of Exeter, uncle of the

famous Richard Hooker, known as "The Judicious," who now sits in white marble with his back to the Cathedral, facing the world. Of Bradninch, John Hooker writes:—

> "Bradnnche is an olde and an anncyent Towne, and was allwes pcell of the Erledame of Cornewall, and the Erles, nowe the Dukes, of Cornewall were named Barones of Bradnnche and Erle[s] or Dukes of Cornewall. This Towne consisteth of three ptes, viz., of a ffee, of a manner, and of a Borough."[1]

Hooker here uses the term "towne"[2] in a comprehensive sense to denote the sum of the three different things of which he treats, each severally known by the name of Bradninch.

Hooker's MS. contains, so far as I am aware, the earliest extant account of Bradninch. It either comes from the same source from which many later accounts,—from that of Polwhele downwards,—are directly or indirectly drawn; or else it is that source itself. As it is the earliest, the fullest, and the most intelligible statement on the subject which I have met, I put it in the fore-front of what I have to say about the barony, manor, and borough of Bradninch, for these are the three parts, of which, as Hooker says, "this Towne consisteth."

Domesday Book

The origin of the honor is to be found in "Domesday Book." This celebrated document—one of the greatest treasures of our national history, now deposited in the Record Office—is a survey made by William the Conqueror of all the lands in England subject to danegelt. In order to make it a perfect record, certain commissioners, called the

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[1] *Harl. MSS.* 5827, p. 136[1].

[2] "The tûn is originally the enclosure or hedge, whether of the single farm, or of the enclosed village, as the burh is the fortified house of the powerful man." STUBBS, *Const. Hist.* p. 82, note; *see* BALY, *Eur-Ar. Roots*, p. 511.

King's Justiciaries, were sent into every county and shire. Juries were summoned in each hundred. They were composed of all orders of freemen, from great barons down to the smallest class of farmers.

The Commissioners were to gather information from the inhabitants, upon oath. The Survey was very minute. The writer of the contemporary portion of the Saxon Chronicle says :—

> "So very narrowly he caused it to be traced out, that there was not a single hide, or yard of land, not an ox, or cow, or hog, that was not set down."

"Domesday Book" was held to be so accurate, that its authority was never permitted to be called in question. Any doubts which happened to arise, as to whether lands were held in ancient demesne, or in any other manner, were determined by its evidence, and its evidence only. And it was "from this definitive authority, from which, as from the sentence pronounced at Domesday, or the Day of Judgment, there could be no appeal," that the name of the Survey is said to have been derived.

Knights' Fees

To insure his being able to hold by the sword what he had won by the sword, William the Conqueror partitioned England into about sixty thousand parcels of nearly equal value, and he required from each the service of a soldier, or the payment of a sum of money estimated to be equivalent to the cost of providing such service. This knight's fee, as it was called, was fixed at the annual value of £20. And the tenant of a knight's fee was bound to be in the field at his own expense each year for forty days. If the value of the land was only half a knight's fee, the service due was twenty days; and if an eighth, only five days. Thirteen knights' fees and a third held in chief of the crown under grant, constituted a barony.

Now we learn from "Domesday Book," that William

granted forty-six manors in Devonshire, with an aggregate area of 22,000 odd acres, to William Capra, brother of Ralph de Pomeray. The following list, taken from Whale's *Analysis of Exon. Domesday*,[1] gives the modern names of the lands recorded in it as belonging to William Capra, together with their acreage, as supplied by the reverend Oswald Joseph Reichel.

William Capra's Manors

Alfardisworthy, Bradworthy	130	Awliscomb	522
Hethestaple, Bradworthy	100	Werrington, Buckerell	225
Sessacot, West Putford	420	Comb-in-Teignhead	405
Huntshaw	1100	Rocombe-Harrige, Combe-in-Teignhead	311
East Leigh, Westleigh	543	Farwood, Tedburn St. Mary	586
Towsington and Lower Shillingford, Exminster	810	Bradninch	2293
Netherton, Exminster	512	½ virgate[2] in Horescoma[3] [Garlandshayes]	100
Matford, Exminster	107	Yaldestane	222
Lower Holcomb, Dawlish	422	Raplinghayes, Gittisham	111
Wollacombe Tracy, Morthoe	1059	Cruwys Morchard	2270
Buckland and Incledon, Braunton	356	Madescama[3]	100
North Buckland, Georgeham	676	Alfresworth, Oakford	1520
Ash, Braunton	383	Middelton, Alfresworth, Oakford	303
Countisbury	1172	Wipletona[3]	914
Lynton } Ilkerton, Lynton }	1390	Puddington	845
East Lyn, Lynton	940	Bradford Tracy, Witheridge	412
Bickworthy, Lynton	235	Down, Witheridge	100
Roadway, Morthoe	460	Buckland Baron, Combe-in-Teignhead	226
Cob-Whimple, Whimple	468	Ivedon, Aulescomb	432
Piswell, Kentisbeare	452	Otre[3] (blotted)	50
Wressin, Kentisbeare	107	East Membury	626
Colebrook, Cullompton	204	Haccombe fee, Axminster	208
Cadleigh Court, Cadleigh	314	South Leigh	1255
Godford, Awliscomb	232		

In the Hundred Rolls forty three distinct estates are enumerated as "pertaining to the manor [*i.e.*, the honor]

[1] pp. 49, 50. [2] This ½ virgate is not called a manor in the Survey. [3] Domesday name.

of Bray-nes." There is another list of the "ffee Tennants which hold of the said Honnor" in the Survey made in 1650. These lists are too long to print in full, but I give the substance of them. The following table gives the tenants, arranged alphabetically, with the manors or lands held by them, and the parishes in which they were situated. The numeral, or fraction, before the tenant's name denotes "by what number, or part, of Knt's ffees he holdeth." This "number, or part" is sometimes stated to be "not certaine." Where this occurs, I print in place of a numeral, a note of interrogation. After the name of each manor I give, in italics within brackets, the form in which it appears in the Hundred Rolls.

Tenants of the Lands in 1650

? *k.f.*—BATH, Henry, Earl of, the Mannor of Combyntynheade (*Combe*), in Combyntynheade.

½ *k.f.*—BELLOW —, Heires of, Certaine lande in Esse, *als.* Aish Roades, in Braunton.

1 *k.f.*—BERRY —, Esqr., Eastley (*Estlegh*), in Westley.

? *k.f.*—BLACKALLER —, Heires of, parcell of the Mannor of Staford, in Swimbridge.

¾ *k.f.*—CASTLE —, Heires of, Buckland Denham (*Buclond Dinham*), in Georgham.

¼ *k.f.*—CHAMPNEYS —, Esqr., fourth pte of Cottersey, in Owlescombe.

¼ *k.f.*—CHICHESTER —, Esq., the Manor of Wellocombe Tracye (*Welcombe*), in Morthowe.

¾ *k.f.*—CHICHESTER, Sir John, Bart., the Manor of Buckland Denham (*Buclond Dinham*), in Georgeham.

1 *k.f.*—CHICHESTER, Sir John, Bart., the Manor of Huggeston and Benton (*Haggeston*), in Bratton ffleminge.

1 *k.f.*—CRUYS, Henry, Esqr., the Manor of Cruysmorchard (*Crues Morchard*).

¼ *k.f.*—DAVIE, Robert, Esq., the Manor of Combe Lancy (*Combe Launcels*), in Sandford.

¼ *k.f.*—DILLON, —, certaine land in Buckland Denham (*Buclond Dinham*).

¼ *k.f.*—FFISH, —, Heires of, Leemoore, in Sowton, and St. Loy and Wenford, in Hevitree.

1 *k.f.*—FFORD, William, Esq., the Manor of East Membury (*Estmembury*), in Membury.

$\frac{1}{8}$ *k.f.*—FFULFORD, Sir ffrancis, Kt., Godford (*Cadford*), in Birliscombe.

1 *k.f.*—GIFFORD, —, Esq., the Heires of, the Manor of Buckland Chelow.

$\frac{1}{4}$ *k.f.*—GLANDVILE, William, Leemoore, in Sowton and Hevitree.

$\frac{5}{12}$ *k.f.*[1]—HAYES, —, gen., Heires of, ffive pts of the Manor of Puddington.

$\frac{1}{12}$ *k.f.*—HAYES, Hugh, Heires of, the sixth pt. of the Manor of Puddington.

1 *k.f.*—HUCKMOORE, —, Heires of, the Manor of Buckland Baron, in Combyntynheade.

1 *k.f.*—HUCKMOORE, —, The said Heires, the Manor of Wetherton in the same parish.

$\frac{1}{6}$ *k.f.*—JESSE, —, The Heires of, the sixth pte of Cottersey, in Owlescombe.

1 *k.f.*—LEACH, Simo, the Manor of Cadley (*Caddalegh*).

$\frac{1}{4}$ *k.f.*—LEY, Roger, land in Leemoore, in Sowton.

$\frac{1}{20}$ *k.f.*—LEY, Roger, land within the Manor of Wendford, in Sowton.

$\frac{1}{20}$ *k.f.*—LOVERINGE, —, the Heires of, ffurshill, in Linton.

$\frac{1}{4}$ *k.f.*—LOVERINGE, —, The said Heires of, Radsprey and Spreyhanger, in the village of Hillconnington, in Linton.

$\frac{1}{4}$ *k.f.*—MALLETT, Sir Thomas, Knt., a moyety of the Mannor of Ivedon, in Birliscombe.

$\frac{1}{4}$ *k.f.*—MELHUISH, Thomas, Heires of, the moyety of Combe, in Puddington.

$\frac{1}{2}$ *k.f.*—MORTIMOOR, *als.* TANNER, gen., certaine Lands in Bradford Tracy, in Witheridge.

$\frac{1}{2}$ *k.f.*—MORTUMOORE, Samuell, *als.* TANNER, certaine Landes, in Bradford, called Rendon, in Witheridge.

$\frac{1}{4}$ *k.f.*—PINE, —, Esqr., the Manor of Withanger, in Linton.

? *k.f.*—SAUNDERS, —, Heires of, parcell of the Manor of Staford, in Swimbridge.

$\frac{1}{4}$ *k.f.*—SMITH, John, the Moyety or half-endeale of the Manor of Ivedon, in Birliscombe.

$\frac{1}{3}$ *k.f.*—SYDDENHAM, —, Esqr., the Manor of South Radworthy (*Suth Radworth*), in North Molton.

$\frac{1}{4}$ *k.f.*—TUCKFIELD, —, Esq., certaine Lands, called Wreppringston, or Woppringston, in Owlescombe.

$\frac{1}{2}$ *k.f.*—UPTON, Arthur, Esq., the Manor of ffarwood (*Farewode*), in St. Todborne.

$\frac{1}{4}$ *k.f.*—WOLROND, William, Esqr,, Landes in Wenford St. Loy, in in Hevitre and in Leymoore, in Sowton.

$\frac{3}{8}$ *k.f.*—WOOD, John, gen., Heires of, certaine Lands in Buckland Denham (*Bocland*), in Georgeham.

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[1] "By ffive ptes of the Moyety of Knt's ffee."

The Court of the Baron

It was the duty of all these gentlemen in the discharge of their knightly service to attend the Court[1] of their Lord at Bradninch twice in the year. Hooker says :—

> "The ffee is of such freeholders and gents as do dwell in Devon, and do holde theire landes of the Lords of Bradnnch by Knyght Service with release upon everye of theire dethes. Theese do appeare twyse in everye yere at the Lordes Courte kept at Bradnnch, and then and theire do present the names of everye free-holder makeinge defaulte, and the names of everye one of the freeholders decessed, the names of the heyres, and of what age he is that shall succeede, with other thinges wch he inquires of. And the Lord hathe his pticular officer or baylyff named the fee baylyffe to smon his courte, and to collecte his rentes and dutyes, and to accompte for the same."

In practice, however, this suit was not regularly done, and was sometimes disputed. It was found[2] for instance :—

> "That Alexander, bailiff of the Lord, the Earl of Cornwall, in Braneys, distrained the Abbott of Forde's men in the Manor of Lynton for a certain suit to be made at the said Earl's Court of Braneys, and fr the peace took eight shillings, and one ox of the value of six shillings, and iron of the value of three shillings and two pence haf penny, of the men aforesaid, unjustly, seeing they were not wont to do suit at the Court aforesaid."

Specimen of Court Rolls

The following extracts from a translation by Mr. Boyd of a court roll of the barony for the years 1572 and 1573 give an idea of the kind of business which came before the court. I have made my selection with a view to shew how the same names repeatedly recur from session to session.

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[1] *Harl. MSS.* 5827, p. 136[1].
[2] *Hundred Rolls, Devon*, p. 79.

L. R. COURT ROLL 16. 11

[1572-3] Bradnynche. Court of the Fee held the 28th day of February in the 15th year of the reign of our lady Elizabeth by the grace of God of England, France, and Ireland, queen, defender of the faith, etc.

Ralph Richardes in mercy for license to agree with Dame Mary Kyngston, widow, in a plea of trespass on the case. Mercy[1] 3d.

. . . . . .

. . . The bailiff there in mercy because he did not distrain John Kemell (3d.) to answer to John Fulford, knight, in a plea of taking cattle. . . .

. . . . . .

[1572-3] Court of the Fee held there on the 17th day of March in the 15th year.

The bailiff is as yet in mercy because he did not distrain John Kemell (3d.) to answer to John Fulford, knight, in a plea of taking cattle.

Thomas Parsons complains of John Hobbes in a plea of debt. They are agreed with assent. . . .

. . . . . .

. . . John Lynaton the younger, complains of Thomas Twigge in a plea of debt on demand 23s. 4d. Defendant acknowledged the debt; therefore let execution be made.

. . . . . .

[1573] Legal court held there the 7th day of April in the 15th year of the lady Elizabeth. . . .

12 [jurors] for the Lady the queen.

George Courtney, gent.	William Wykes
John Peryman	Henry Lowdge
William Oxenham	John Mortimer
John Goer	Richard Hopkins
Henry Walderon	William Taylor
Thomas Woodley	John Prynge, the younger
Gilbert Weston	Edmund Conybere
Benedict Stronge	Christopher Peers

Who come and present that Thomas Baker alias Howe of Thorverton on the 20th day of March in the 14th year of Elizabeth now queen, at Cadley, in the fee aforesaid, by warrant of the sheriff arrested a certain Maurice Lee and

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[1] *I.e.* found guilty, and therefore at the mercy of the Lord.

took him to the sheriff to "Warde" at Exeter and imprisoned him and so broke the liberty of the fee aforesaid contrary to the peace of the lady the queen and to the evil example of others. And that Robert Allford of Bowe, gent., in the fair for young cattle of the Holy Cross held at Credyton in the feast aforesaid in the 14th year, unjustly took from William Seyward 1d. for toll for apples by the said William then and there sold, contrary to the peace of the said lady the queen and to the evil example of others. Let them be distrained.

The bailiff there is as yet in mercy because he did not distrain John Kemell to answer John Fulford, knight, in a plea of taking cattle. Mercy 3d.

John Hobbs in mercy for license to agree with Thomas Parsons in a plea of debt. Mercy 3d. . . .

. . . . . .

To this court came Peter Bredlewe (12d.), the heirs of Thomas Payne (12d.), Henry Barreye (12d.), Thomas Myke (12d.), and other feoffees (12d.), of John Coble (12d.), Thomas Woulse (12d.), John Whyttmoe (12d.), George Fuckerye (12d.), Gilbert Davye (12d.), Humphrey Walron (12d.), and other feoffees (12d.), of John Kayens (12d.), the heirs (12d.), of Thomas Loveringe (12d.), John Francis, esq. (12d.), John Cruse of Northchard, gent. (12d.), the heirs of Bradford (12d.), the tenants of the manor of Podington (12d.), the heirs of Thomas Trethruffe (12d.), the tenants of Hatche (12d.), John Halse (12d.), John Chichister (12d.), the tenants of the manor of Hunt showe (12d.), the heirs of William Courteney, knight, (12d.), the heirs of Henry Champyon. esq. (12d.), who gave the lady the queen fines for releasing their common suits this year. . . .

. . . . . .

[1573] Court of the Fee held there the 12th day of May in the above mentioned year of the reign of the lady Elizabeth.

The bailiff there in mercy because he did not distrain Thomas Baker alias Howe (3d.), and Robert Allford, gents. (3d.), to answer to the lady the queen for trespass, wherefore, etc. Distraint. John Hobbs in mercy for license to agree with Thomas Parson in a plea of debt. Mercy 3d. . . .

. . . . . .

. . . John Fulford, knight, complains of John Kemell in a plea of taking cattle. They are agreed with assent.

. . . . . .

[1573] Court of the Fee held there the 18th day of June in the 15th year of the reign of the lady Elizabeth. . . .

. . . John Fullford, knight, complains of John Kemel in a plea of taking cattle. They are agreed with assent.

. . . . . .

[1573] Court of the Fee held there the 28th day of July in the 15th year of the reign of the lady Elizabeth. . . .

. . . John Fulford, knight, complains of John Kemell in a plea of taking cattle. They are agreed.

Margaret Venner complains of Robert Upcott in a plea of trespass on the case. Let him be summoned.

The bailiff there comes and presents that John Combe of Cruse Norchard incroached on the road of the lady the queen at —— in the fee, to the hurt of the people of the lady the queen. Therefore let him be distrained. . . .

. . . . . .

[1573] Court of the Fee held there the 18th day of August in the year aforesaid etc. . . .

. . . John Fulford, knight, complains of John Kemell in a plea of taking cattle. They are agreed.

. . . . . .

[1573] Court of the fee held there the 2nd day of September, in the 15th year of the reign of the lady Elizabeth etc.

. . . The same bailiff in mercy because he did distrain John Combe of Cruse to answer the said lady the queen for trepass. Therefore let him be distrained. Mercy 3d.

. . . John Fulford, knight, complains of John Kemell in a plea of taking cattle. They are agreed.

Sum total of the eight courts there this year—35s. 6d.

Succession of Barons

The descent of Capra's barony for the first few generations is involved in much obscurity. Risdon says in so many words: "Reginald Earl of Cornwall was Lord of Braneys, and Henry, son of Earl Reginald succeeded him."[1] Local tradition carefully handed down has

[1] *Note Book*, p. 128.

always asserted that this Reginald de Dunstanville, the third of the fourteen illegitimate children of king Henry I., granted to Bradninch its first charter, and the seal of the Corporation has been held to corroborate the claim.[1] Reginald was created earl of Cornwall[2] about April 1141, probably by the empress Maud, but the title was fully recognised afterwards by king Stephen.[3] It is true that during his lifetime, in 1166, the land is returned as belonging not to Reginald, but to William Tracy, bestowed on him apparently by Henry II.[4] And this fact is perplexing in the face, not only of Risdon's assertion that Reginald was succeeded by his son Henry Fitz Count, but of Henry's own statement in 1207, that when he acquired the estates by purchase about 1203 he "recovered his inheritance."[5] Risdon says that Fitz Count "held the same honor, but the king resumed it into his own handes after some short space after the death of Reginald.[6] And Sir William Pole arguing the point says :—

> "Yeat nevertheless, it is very apparent that Henry *filius comitis* held this honor, and most of the rest of the land, and challenged therledome, but never obtained it, and was at the last alsoe bereved of other the honors and lands by Kinge Henry 3, but he died without issue in his old age."[7]

Reichel says that from William Tracy the honor passed with his daughter and heiress to John de Sudeley, and to his second son William who took his mother's name of Tracy, and was known to inglorious fame as the murderer of the archbishop Thomas of Canterbury. With this William's daughter Eva it

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[1] See below, Chapter IV.

[2] Whether he became baron of Bradninch at the same date I am unable to say, but that he did hold the barony there is no doubt.

[3] *Complete Peerage.* [4] *Trans. Dev. Ass.*, XXXIV., 511.

[5] *Pipe Rolls*, 3 Henry III. [6] *Ib.*, p. 128.

[7] *Collections*, p. 24.

passed in 1174 to William Courteney, who also called himself Tracy.[1] On the death of Eva, Henry Fitz Count purchased the honor for 1200 marks[2] about the year 1203, and held it for sixteen fees. This money it appears was not paid in full, for in 1220 he "stood indebted to the king in five hundred and ninety seven pounds and one mark, which was due by him to king John for the honor of Braeles (*alias* Broeneis)." It further appears, that "the same year, disobeying the king's commands, as also stubbornly departing the court without leave, the king discharged all his subjects . . . from having anything to do with him,"[3] and resumed possession of the honor.

Henry III. made two grants of the lands with all services of knights and free tenants thereto belonging to Henry de Trublevill. The first, made on 4th June, 1223, had force "during the king's pleasure."[4] The second grant, made the 4th May, 1227, gave the lands "well and in peace freely and quietly and entirely." On receiving this second grant, Henry de Trublevill sublet it to Drogo de Trublevill, "as the attorney and custos of the aforesaid honor."[5] Henry de Trublevill died seized of it, in 1243,[6] and on his death William de Londre[7] held it "as the king's bailiff."[8]

Richard Plantagenet, the next baron of Bradninch,

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[1] REICHEL, *Vict. Hist.*, p. 560; cf. *Supp. to Domesday Anal.*, p. 6.

[2] DUGDALE, *Bar.* I ; *Trans. Dev. Ass.*, XXIX., 486, n. 47; *Rot. Pat.*, 10 Hen. III., m. 6.

[3] GILBERT, Vol. IV., p. 355.

[4] *Rot. Pat.*, 7 Hen. III., m. 3; *Close Roll*, 7 Hen. III., m. 9.

[5] *Rot. Pat.*, 11 Hen. III., m. 6.

[6] *Inq. p. m.*, Hen. III., No. 5; *Cal. of Inq.*, No. 32.

[7] *Testa de Nevill* (Rec. com. 182. b.).

[8] William Peverel (or Piperelli) was called "de Londonia" from his honor in Essex, and Whale thinks he was known by either name.—*Supplement to "Domesday Analysis in Hundreds,"* pp. 2-3.

"rose, in name at least, to the highest place on earth, called to wear, if not . . . the golden crown of Rome, yet at least the silver crown of Aachen."[1] He was born 5th January, 1209, the second son of king John. He was all his life a man of immense wealth. Even in his boyhood he possessed large estates in Kent, Suffolk, and Berkshire. At the age of sixteen (1225) his brother "King Henry III. girt him with the knightly sword," and granted to him the custody (*i.e.*, shrievalty) of the county of Cornwall, together with the rich tin mines which belonged to his mother. Later he received from the king "all their mother's dower," vast estates in Wales, and, in 1227, the title, dignity, and lands belonging to the earldom of Cornwall. Thus nobly equipped, he began his adventurous life by a crusade to the Holy Land.

Richard, King of the Romans

In a second expedition, made in 1240, he concluded a truce with the sultan, freed Jerusalem, redeemed many French prisoners, fortified Ascalon, made an endowment for masses to be said for the Christian soldiers there buried, and handed the town over to the representatives of the emperor Frederick. His return journey through Europe in 1242 was one long triumphal reception. In England he was greeted as a hero, and his marriage with Sanchia of Provence, sister to the queens of England and of France, was made an occasion of great rejoicing. As a wedding gift, the king bestowed upon him, on the 11th November, 1244, "the manor of Braydneys, with the advowson of the church of the same manor, and the knights' fees to the same manor belonging."[2] Richard was always a prudent man, and administered his estates with extreme care. Out of the abundance of his wealth he lent large sums to the king, who, as a means of recouping him, gave him the farming

[1] FREEMAN'S *Exeter*, pp. 78-9.
[2] *Charter Roll*, 29 Henry III., m. 7.

of the new coinage for twelve years, and as a further pledge for the sums advanced, a grant of royal rights over all the Jews in England, "an enormous addition to his already vast resources." But with all his thrift, Richard fully understood the value of pomp and munificence. His benefactions to the church were very large, and the pope held him in high esteem. "In 1250, passing through France with a pompous retinue, viz., forty knights all in rich liveries, five waggons, and fifty sumpter horses (his lady and his son Henry being also with him), the pope, being then at Lyons, sent all his cardinals except one to meet him, and conduct him thither, and there receiving him with great respect feasted him at his own table."[1]

Shortly afterwards the pope offered him the crown of Sicily, of which the excommunicated emperor Frederick II. had been deprived. But Richard refused to stand in opposition to his sister's husband, and he declined it. Greater honours were in store for him. The offer of the crown of Germany was the great opportunity of his life. Since his second crusade he had been a personage of European importance, famed "for his heroic and noble endowments," and known as the possessor of great wealth.

On the Feast of the Nativity, 1256, "certain nobles of Almaine [Germany] being arrived here, represented to the whole baronage of England then met, that by unanimous consent of the princes of the empire he was elected king of the Romans, . . . soon after which the archbishop of Cologne, with divers others of the nobles of that country, came likewise hither, and did homage to him; whereupon he gave them three hundred marks towards their travelling expenses, as also a rich mitre, adorned with precious stones."[2] Leaving the charge of his castles and lands in England to the bishop of London, he and Sanchia his wife departed with an

[1] GILBERT, IV., p. 363. [2] *Ib.*, pp. 363, 364.

imposing retinue for Aachen, where they were crowned with magnificent solemnity by Conrad of Cologne upon Ascension Day, 1257. Richard was the only Englishman who ever attempted to rule the Holy Roman Empire. But from various causes his popularity and his power failed to increase. His friend pope Innocent IV. died, and the ambition of his life, to be crowned emperor in Rome, was never fulfilled.

In England during the long struggle between the barons and the king, his influence was always on the side of his brother. His money went far towards keeping up the royal army, which he commanded at the battle of Lewes, when both he and the king were taken prisoner. With him in this battle was his elder son Henry, whom he had knighted when a lad in his teens on the day of his coronation at Aachen. In 1272 the prince joined his cousin Edward, prince of Wales, in a new expedition to the Holy Land. But when half way there he obtained leave to return in order to see his father. On his passage through Italy, while attending high mass in the church of St. Lawrence at Viterbo, he was basely murdered by a son of Simon de Montfort, in revenge for the death of his father, slain at the battle of Evesham seven years before. The king of the Romans never recovered the shock of this tragedy. A stroke of paralysis supervened, and he died on the 2nd April, 1272. He was buried in the beautiful Cistercian Abbey of Hayles, near Winchcombe, in Gloucestershire, the grandest of the many religious houses which he had founded and liberally endowed. Richard Plantagenet was the last earl of Cornwall who exercised even the semblance of independent authority. "The earldom and dukedom have, since his time, done no more than afford a revenue and bestow a name."[1]

Bradninch has its own peculiar interest in this prince.

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[1] GILBERT, II., p. 392.

Though his principal English residence was at Wallingford, and though when in the west he kept court at his more important castles of Lostwithiel or Restormel, he yet had both a palace and a park here, the sites of which are approximately indicated to this day by the surviving names of Palace Coombe and Park. And further—his election to a position of great eminence in a foreign land more than six hundred years ago, has left an abiding and unique mark upon this small Devon town. Bradninch has always been proud of its arms, though it has been mistaken in looking upon them as the arms of Reginald, the traditional donor of its first charter. They have a much more exalted origin. Our black eagle is the cognisance of the great emperor Charlemagne, which Richard, as king of the Romans, had the right to bear. His epitaph tells how he laid aside the royal lion of England, to which he was entitled as the son of the king, to place upon his shield the eagle of his new country. And he honoured his Devonshire borough by granting to it the right to use his imperial bearing,[1] which is engraved on its official seal, and decorates the face of its Guildhall.

Arms of Bradninch

Edmund, earl of Cornwall, 1272—1300, was the second son of the king of the Romans, and on his father's death he succeeded to his English honours.

Earl Edmund's park at Bradninch was more than a mere demesne or pleasure ground. It was the home of the deer. On the 12th of November, 1282, a commission of oyer and terminer issued to "R. Fulconis and W. Braiboef, touching the persons who hunted and carried away deer in Edmund Earl of Cornwall's forest

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[1] "Insignitus erat Caroli rutilante coronâ.
Hinc Aquilam gessit clypeo, sprevitque Leonem."
With Charles's crown he had been crowned,
And hence illustrified,
He bore the eagle on his shield,
The lion cast aside.

of Dertemor and his park of Bradenech, co. Devon."[1] The park furnished the royal larder. On information of W[alter de Langton], bishop of Coventry and Lichfield—whose connexion with the manor I have not discovered—a royal order was made on the 2nd of August, 1301, to—

> "John de Tresympel, Keeper of the King's manor of Braynes, for ten bucks to be taken in the present grease time, and to cause them to be salted and well prepared, placed in barrels, and safely kept until the King shall otherwise ordain."[2]

A tender little tale, shewing that kings had hearts even in the middle ages, attaches to these lands of Park. On the 5th of June, 1377, Edward the Black Prince, the first duke of Cornwall, made a grant to William Corby, one of his yeomen, and Agnes his wife, of 15 marks (£10) yearly, "out of the profits of the prince's manor of Brandenynche," with this addition, that as he cannot obtain them from the profits of the said manor, because of the annuity of £40 which John de Sully, "King's Knight, takes therefrom . . . he is to receive £10 yearly henceforth from the receiver of Cornwall, until he can obtain the said 15 marks from the profits aforesaid."[3] On the accession of Richard II. to the throne of his grandfather, he demised to Corby and his wife "the park of Bradenynch, Co. Devon, with two water mills and fishings appurtenant, 148 acres of land and 16 of meadow in Langemede, and 11 of meadow in Chalkwelmede [Charwellmead], and 40 of pasture within the park" with "house-bote and hay-bote,"[4] at the yearly rent of £11 6*s.* 8*d.* Ten years later, in consideration

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[1] *Patent Rolls*, 10 Edw. I., m. 1.
[2] *Close Rolls*, 29 Edw. I., m. 5.
[3] *Patent Rolls*, 1 Rich. II., pt. 6, m. 16.
[4] *I.e.* with the privilege of using what was needful for the maintenance and repair of the dwellings, and mills, and fences in the park.—*Rot. Pat.*, 1 Rich. II., pt. 3, m. 5.

of their surrendering their claim to the £10, the king made "a grant for their lives in survivorship to the said William and Agnes of the park . . . without rendering aught therefor."[1] In recording these transactions the rolls incidentally reveal the reason why the king so favoured William and his wife Agnes as to give them his park at Bradninch rent free. She "had been the king's nurse."[2]

By the death of Edmund in 1300 the earldom lapsed to the crown, and the estates of the barony were for some years in charge of John de Tresympel, as keeper of the manor for king Edward I. When Edward II. came to the throne, almost his first act was to recall from banishment his fatal favourite, Piers (Peter) Gaveston, and to bestow upon him the earldom of Cornwall. Not content with conferring on his worthless friend this princely appanage, the king daily loaded him with new honours and riches and married him to his own niece, Margaret de Clare, daughter of his sister, Joan of Acre, countess of Gloucester. Gaveston was hated by the barons, who, goaded by his mad pranks and intolerable insolence, at last took the law into their own hands, and struck off his head near Warwick, on the 1st July, 1312. After his death, the king bestowed upon his widow, the countess of Cornwall, by divers grants, among other estates the honor of Bradninch, as part of the provision which "he thought fit to make for her state."[3] She afterwards married, in 1317, Hugh de Audele, or Audley, duke of Gloucester, and they held the lands "for their lives."[4] Before their life interest ceased, on the death of the countess in 1342, a change took place which wedded the earldom and the barony together in perpetuity.

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[1] *Patent Rolls*, 1 Rich. II., pt. 1, m. 10.
[2] *Ib.*, 9 Rich. II., pt. 1, m. 17.
[3] *Rot. Pat.*, 10 Edw. II., pt. 1., m. 2.
[4] *Ib.*, 13 Edw, II., m. 38.

The Barony merged in the Dukedom of Cornwall

On the 17th March, 1336/7, king Edward III. "created his furst begoten sonne, Edward, Duke of Cornwal, and Erle of Chestre, and by th'assent and Counseill of Prelats, Dukes, Erles, Barons and other in his plain Parlement, . . . made to and for his said furst begoten sonne grauntes, ordinances, annexions, and unions."[1] The lands so granted were to be held in perpetuity by "his furst begoten sonne," Edward, and the "first begotten sons of him and his heirs, kings of England." This was the first creation of a dukedom in England. The first duke was Edward, soon to become famous as the 'Black Prince.' The charter creating the dukedom gives Bradninch and the castle of Exeter to the dukes of Cornwall, and from this time onward the first son of the king holds the barony of Bradninch as parcel of the duchy.

Bradninch in Exon

The connection between the barony of Bradninch and the castle of Exeter began when the barony was given to Richard Plantagenet. It was a rule without exception that "every honor had a caput, or chief seat."[2] From the time of Capra the 'head' of this barony had been the palace, not the town, of Bradninch. But henceforth Rougemont Castle became the 'principal seat' of the baron—the 'head' of the barony, or, as Simpson in his survey officially styles it, 'the proper Mansion or Manor House belonging to the Honor of Bradninch.' In the existing surveys of the barony it is called 'Bradninch in Exon.' This new head of the barony, in contrast to the uneventful course run by the barony itself, has played no mean part in our national history from the earliest times. Its site was fortified by the Britons. The Romans strengthened the fortress. After their departure the

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[1] *Rot. Pat.*, Vol. v., p. 356.
[2] *Complete Peerage*, Vol. vi., p. 342 note.

place became the residence of the Saxon kings, and was often attacked by the Danes. It was taken and retaken in the time of Alfred. After its destruction by the Danes, it was built in the reign of Athelstan (925-41) for the first time in stone, but exactly on the lines of the ancient earthworks. It was utterly demolished by Sweyn some seventy years later. Again rebuilt, it stood a siege of eighteen days in 1067 before it bowed to the Conqueror, who converted it into a castle of massive Norman work to overawe the city. Hooker says of it:—

> "It standeth emynent and above the citie wch lyeth under the lee subiection and comanndement thereof. It hath allwa es benne the habitation and dwellinge house of the cheefest princes in this countrie and therein was a very fayre house for theire dwellinge."

It was often besieged: by Stephen for three months, in 1137, when it capitulated for want of water; by the Yorkists, in 1469; by Perkin Warbeck, in 1497; for thirty-five days in 1549, when the western counties rose in defence of what was called "the old religion"; and for many months during the Civil War of the Commonwealth. When the king was restored it was dismantled as a fortress. The ditch at the lower end of Northernhay was filled with rubbish in 1698.[1] The sally-port, "by the rude vulgar called the Devil's Cradle," was still standing "not quite ruinous" in 1759. The county prison, which stood on the right going up Castle Street, called "The Old Gaol" in 1459,[2] was removed in 1796. About 1774 all that remained of the Castle was razed to the ground, except the chapel which stood within the walls, and the lofty tower which is still to be seen in the gardens of the Bradninch precinct.[3]

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[1] Bryce, *Geographical Dictionary*.

[2] For a description of it see Oliver. It is described as "a living tomb—a sink of filth, pestilence and profligacy," a worthy duplicate on a larger scale of the "Borough Gaol or House of Correction" of the borough of Bradninch.—Oliver, *Hist. Ex.*, p. 190 note.

[3] Lysons, Vol. II., cccxlvi.

The Castle Chapel

About the time when Baldwin de Brioniis reconstructed the fortress for William the Conqueror, the chapel,[1] dedicated to S. Mary—a plain building consisting of nave and chancel—was erected by the "Ladie Elizab. de Fortibus Counte of Devon, unto wch she gave certaine Landes for contynuall serwice and masse to be sayed, named the prebend of Hayes and the prebend of Cutton."[2] To these were added at an early date the prebends of Carswell and Ashclyst. The patronage of all these belonged to the barony of Okehampton, and did not pass with the castle to the baron of Bradninch.

The prebend of Hayes, first in rank and richest of the four, being valued in 1555 at £37 7s. 11d., passed after a changeful history into the family of Buller, by the marriage in 1739 of Elizabeth Gould with James Buller. Oliver gives a list of seventeen prebendaries of Hayes, beginning with Thomas de Wimundesham in the year 1261, and ending with Walter Hert, A.B., in 1591. The prebend of Carswell or Cresswell consisted of about 141 acres in the parish of Kenn. Oliver enumerates twenty-nine prebendaries of Carswell, from Philip de Dutton, whose name appears in pope Nicholas' 'Taxation,' to William Ludlow, who was instituted in 1847. The prebend of Ashclyst was alienated to Tor Abbey in 1238, and formed part of its possessions until the suppression of the monastery, when it was valued at £12 10s. 10¾d. The latest institution to it took place in 1261.[3]

The prebend of Cutton, which was endowed with the manor and farm of Cutton in the parish of Poltimore, had the good fortune to come into the just and beneficent hands of the Acland family before 19th January, 1634/5. By the demolition of the chapel, the prebend became a sinecure, and in 1863, at the instance of

[1] Hooker, *MS. Harl.*, 5827, p. 507. [2] Risdon, p. 110.
[3] Oliver, *Hist. Ex.*, p. 196.

Sir Thomas Dyke Acland, Bart., the Ecclesiastical Commissioners prepared a scheme (under Act 3 and 4 Victoria, chapter 113), bearing date the 26th of March, 1863, "for permanently uniting the prebend of Cutton, in the Castle of Exeter . . . to the Vicarage of Broadclyst." The scheme recommended and proposed that . . . "the said prebend and vicarage shall become and be permanently united and consolidated, and that the same shall become and be one benefice with cure of souls, by the name of the Vicarage of Broadclyst." This scheme was sanctioned by Order in Council dated 28th April, 1863. And since that date the vicar of Broadclyst for the time being is—whether he use the style or not—prebendary of Cutton. For it cannot be supposed that a document, drawn up by the Ecclesiastical Commissioners for the express purpose of securing to the church in perpetuity one of its ancient endowments, should have the effect of gratuitously suppressing the ancient title attached to that endowment.

I subjoin a list of the holders of this prebend:—

1260. Henry de Esse
John Moritz
1322. Walter de Clopton
1346. Thomas de Courtenay
1348. Robert de Paston
1350. Otho de Northwode
1360. Philip de Courtenay
1366. Robert Vaggescombe
William Bermyncham
1382. Robert Vaggescombe
1382. Henry Cole
Thomas Kerdyngton
1400. John Radeclyffe
1406. Walter Robert
1407-8. Thomas de Kerdyngton
1419. Richard Donscombe
1421. Richard Aldryngton
Robert Felton
1438. Richard Beauchamp
1441. Thomas Bekyngton
1443. John de la Bere
1448. Geoffry Motte
1450. Thomas Copeland
1460. Thomas Coplestone
John Fulford
1494-5. Thomas Gilbert
1503. Thomas Harryes
John Skelton
1529. John Touker
1556. John Blackston
1560-1. Richard Tremayne
1584-5. John Bradford
1619. John Bradford, Junior
Thomas Atwill
1634-5. Humphry Saunders
1662-3. John Proctor
1671. Bernard Galard
1694. Thomas Bate
1703. Thomas Acland
1735. Edward Reeks

1748. George Drake
1752. John Pitman
1768. John Acland
1795. John Pitman, Junior
1831. Francis Huyshe
1840. William Barker
1842. Charles Leslie Courtenay
1845. Peter Leopold Dyke Acland
1896. Charles Probart Whitaker[1]

The ancient prebendal church of S. Mary did not rank as a royal free chapel, and the prebendaries, who were instituted by the bishop, had no dean or provost. The chapel did not long survive the castle. Under powers conferred by act of parliament passed in 1787 it was removed in 1792.[3]

A row of houses called "Bradninch Place" was built by a Mr. Manwaring within the precincts of the castle in the first or second decade of the seventeenth century. It is said that from this time onward, down to the year 1792 when the chapel was razed, the inhabitants of these houses were accustomed to use it not only for public worship, but for baptisms and marriages.

The precinct of the castle, not being part of any adjoining parish, was constituted a special rateable area, with its own overseers of the poor, who collected through their nominee its allotted portion of the city rates. Mr. J. M. Martin, at one time a resident in the precinct, filled the office of overseer for the precinct. He tells me that on taking office he was instructed that if any one living within the area wished to be married by banns, it would be necessary to have them published in the parish church of Bradninch. Since I came here I have had two inquiries from beyond the seas as to whether the parish registers recorded marriages of residents in the castle precinct in Exeter. It is manifest that a very general belief prevailed that the castle of Exeter lay within the parish of Bradninch. I have seen nothing to shew that it was ever made part of this

[1] OLIVER, pp. 200-3. [2] FREEMAN'S *Exeter*, p. 68.
[3] OLIVER, p. 197.

parish. That it was not part of the original parish of Bradninch may be taken as certain. The castle with its precinct constituted "Bradninch in Exon," *i.e.*, part of the honor, not part of the parish, of Bradninch.

By permission of the barons of Bradninch, the courts of assize and general quarter sessions of the peace for the county were held in the castle from an early date. After the judge, eleven jurymen, and five magistrates had been carried off by gaol fever, caught at the Lent assizes in 1585, the courts sat for a time in other places. New courts were erected on the site of the present courts about 1624. In 1655 the justices of Devon appointed colonel Robert Shapcote, one of the members for the county, "to attend General Disbrowe," major-general commanding the western district, "for the obtayning of a grant of the said castle of Exon, and the said hawses and places of judicature from his highness the Lord Protector, to and for the use of this county, according to his highness' gracious promise in that behalfe."[1] In 1773 an act was passed vesting "the scite of the castle within the walls" in certain justices, as commissioners in trust for the county of Devon, "under the old reserved rent of £10" to the duke of Cornwall. And in the following year the first stone of the present courts was laid.

Sale of the Honor

Shortly after the meeting of Parliament, 1649, that followed the execution of king Charles I., an act was passed, "Intituted an Act of the Commons in parliam. Assembled, for the sale of the Honos: Manos: and Lands heeretofore belonging to the late Kinge, Queene, and Prince etc." Under this act the Duchy of Cornwall was "vested and settled" in trustees, for the use of the Commonwealth. The trustees caused a survey to be made "of the Honor, Manor, and Burrough of Bradninch with the Rightes, Members, and Appurtenetes, scituate lying and being

[1] HAMILTON, pp. 166-7.

[in] the County of Devon part of the Dukedume of Cornewale and parcele of the Possessions of Charles Stuart late Duke of Cornewall." The survey was "returned" and signed on the 25th November, 1650, by "Edward Hoore, George Gentleman, Grabrell Taylor, and George Goodman."

On the last day of the same year,—"the four and twentieth day of March, 1650,—an indenture[1] was made between the trustees, of the one part, and "Thomas Sanders of Pyehembury, in the Countie of Devon, Esqre., and John Gorges of Pounsford, in the Countie of Sommersett, Esqre.," of the other part. This deed "WITNESSETH" that the trustees

> "HAVE granted aliened Bargained an Sold, and by these psnts doe graunt Aliene bargaine and sell unto the said Tho: Saunders and John Gorges theire heirres and assignes ALL that the Manors Hono and Borough of Bradninch wth the Rightes Members and Appurtenances thereof etc."

This sale was made

> "in Consideration of the summe of Nyneteene Thousand ffive hundred and seaventeene poundes eleaven shillings tenne pence ffarthing of Lawful money of England."

Of this sum

> "The full of the first moyetie, being Nine Thousand seaven hundred and ffiftie Eight pounds ffifteene shillings and Eleaven pence halfe farthing"

had been paid on the 22nd of March, and

> "the other moyetie is by the said Contract to bee paid or secured in such maner as is agreed."

In the convention parliament, after the restoration of king Charles II., a bill was brought in to confirm all

[1] As this sale was unknown to the Keeper of the Records at the Office of the Duchy of Cornwall until I mentioned it to him, I print the deed, which is now in possession of the Bradninch Town Trust, *in extenso* at the end of the chapter.

sales of land made under the commonwealth. The zeal of the royalists soon caused the crown lands to be excepted. But the dissolution of parliament before any act was passed left the question of ownership to be decided by the common course of law, and the dukes of Cornwall entered without let or hindrance into peaceful possession of their own again.[1]

The castle, as a fortress, was not included in the sale. In fact it was only by treachery that it was lost to the King. "One Thom Leche" who had been entrusted with "the keping of the Castell of Excestr wh. certen Londs lying [in] the same," proved unfaithful to the trust, and at the "insurreccon made" became "oon" of the "mysdoers," and played into the hands of the commonwealth. However, by "the grete labor and instince of the Bysshop of Chestr"[2] the prince obtained "entre and season" of the castle and lands "unto the prince's use" once more.

The number of manors belonging to the honor of Bradninch dwindled as time went on. Some of the barons made grants of portions of their lands for various reasons to religious houses. Not only were the estates thus reduced in number, but concealment for the purpose of avoiding payment on knight's fees grew into a practice. And thus we find the number of fees for which the honor was held variously stated at different dates, falling from twenty-eight and a quarter in the reign of Henry II., to sixteen in 1209. And in 1272 enquiry failed to discover by what fees and what services it was held.[3] The survey of 1650 accounts for almost the whole of the sixteen fees. But in 1788, Simpson declares that they had wholly vanished.

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[1] HALLAM'S *Cont. Hist.*, 7th ed., 1854, Vol. II., pp. 307, 308.

[2] This was John Wilkins, bishop of Chester (1668), steward of the manor.

[3] *Chapter House Rot. Hun.*, No. 7, Devon.

This chapter may fitly close with a list of the holders of the barony of Bradninch, from the time of the Domesday Survey to the present day.

BARONS OF BRAN-ES BEFORE THE DUKEDOM

I. 1086 to ?	William Capra held the barony in 1086. At a date unknown it seems to have lapsed to the crown.
II. 1141 to ?	Reginald de Dunstanville acquired the barony by grant, probably from the empress Maud. He appears to have forfeited it.
III. 1166 to ?	William Tracy held the barony in 1166, probably by grant from king Henry II.
IV. ? to ?	Grace Tracy, who married John de Sudeley, daughter and heiress of William Tracy (III.), held the barony by inheritance.
V. ? to 1174	William Tracy, second son of John de Sudeley, held the barony by inheritance.
VI. 1174 to *c.* 1203	Eva Tracy, who married William Courtenay, *alias* Tracy, daughter and heiress of William Tracy (V.), held the barony by inheritance. At her death it lapsed to the crown.
VII. ? to 1220	Henry Fitz Count, elder son of Reginald de Dunstanville (II.), held the barony by purchase from king John. He forfeited it in 1220, when it again lapsed to the crown.
VIII. 1223 to 1243	Henry de Trubleville held the barony by grant during the king's pleasure. At his death the crown resumed possession.
IX. 1243 to 1272	Richard Plantagenet, king of the Romans, second son of king John, held the barony by grant from his brother, king Henry III.
X. 1272 to 1300	Edmund Plantagenet, younger son of Richard Plantagenet (IX.), held the barony by inheritance. At his death it lapsed to the crown.
XI. 1307 to 1312	Piers Gaveston held the barony by grant from king Edward II. At his death it lapsed to the crown.
XII. 1312 to 1342	Margaret de Clare, niece to king Edward II., and widow of Gaveston (XI.), held the barony for life by divers grants from king Edward II. At her death it passed, by the charter of Edward III. which created the duchy of Cornwall, to his first-begotten son, the Black Prince.

DUKES OF CORNWALL, BARONS OF BRAN-ES

I. 1337 to 1376 — EDWARD PLANTAGENET, "of Woodstock," the Black Prince, first son and heir apparent of Edward III., born 15th June, 1330, was created in parliament Duke of Cornwall 17th March, 1337. He died in his father's lifetime, 8th June, 1376, when all his peerage dignities lapsed to the crown.

II. 1376 to 1377 — RICHARD PLANTAGENET, "of Bordeaux," first surviving son and heir of Edward of Woodstock, born 6th January, 1367, was created Duke of Cornwall 20th November, 1376. He ascended the throne 22nd June, 1377, as Richard II., when all his honours merged in the crown.

III. 1399 to 1413 — HENRY PLANTAGENET, "of Monmouth," son and heir of Henry IV., born 16th September, 1386, was created in parliament Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwall, and Earl of Chester. He ascended the throne as Henry V., 21st March, 1412/13, when all his honours merged in the crown.

IV. 1421 to 1422 — HENRY PLANTAGENET, Duke of Cornwall, born 6th December, 1421, son and heir apparent of Henry V. He ascended the throne as Henry VI. 1st September, 1422, when all his honours merged in the crown.

V. 1453 to 1471 — EDWARD PLANTAGENET, Duke of Cornwall, only son and heir of Henry VI., was born 13th October, 1453. He died in the lifetime of his father, 6th May, 1471, when his peerage dignities lapsed to the crown.

VI. 1460 — RICHARD PLANTAGENET, Duke of York (whose son shortly afterwards ascended the throne as Edward IV.), having obtained possession of the person of the then king, Henry VI., was granted *for life* the principality of Wales, and the counties of Chester and Flint, under the style of Prince of Wales, Duke of Cornwall, and Earl of Chester. He died 30th December, 1460, aged 48, when the dignities thus created to him for life expired with him.

VII. 1470 & 1471 to 1483 — EDWARD PLANTAGENET, Duke of Cornwall at his birth, son and heir apparent of Edward IV., born 2nd November, 1470, was created Prince of Wales, 26th June, 1471, and by patent, 17th July, 1471, was in parliament created[1] Duke of Cornwall.

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[1] For the reason for this creation see *Complete Peerage*, Vol. II., p. 367 note.

VIII. 1483 to 1484 — EDWARD PLANTAGENET, Earl of Salisbury, son and heir apparent of Richard, Duke of Gloucester, born 1473, became, on the accession of his father to the throne, 26th June, 1483, Duke of Cornwall. He died unmarried while his father still lived, when his peerage dignities lapsed to the crown.

IX. 1486 to 1502 — ARTHUR TUDOR, Duke of Cornwall, first son and heir of king Henry VII., born 20th September, 1486, died without issue in his father's lifetime, and his peerage dignities lapsed to the crown.

X. 1502 to 1509 — HENRY TUDOR, Duke of York, next brother to the above-named Arthur, born 28th June, 1491, became, as first surviving son and heir of the king of England, Duke of Cornwall on his brother's death, 2nd April, 1502. He ascended the throne as Henry VIII., 22nd April, 1509, when all his honours merged in the crown.

XI. 1510 — HENRY TUDOR, Duke of Cornwall, first son and heir of king Henry VIII., born 1st January, 1509/10; died 22nd February in the same year, when the dukedom lapsed to the crown.

XII. 1514 — [HENRY?] TUDOR, Duke of Cornwall, at his birth first surviving son and heir of king Henry VIII. He was born November, 1514, and died the same day, when the dukedom lapsed to the crown.

XIII. 1537 to 1547 — EDWARD TUDOR, Duke of Cornwall at his birth, first surviving son and heir of Henry VIII. He was born 12th October, 1537. He ascended the throne, as Edward VI., 28th January, 1546/7, when the dukedom merged in the crown.

XIV. 1603 to 1612 — HENRY FREDERICK STUART, son and heir apparent of king James I., born 19th February, 1593/4, became Duke of Cornwall on the accession of his father to the throne of England, 24th March, 1602/3. He died unmarried in his father's lifetime, 6th November, 1612, when his peerage dignities lapsed to the crown.

XV. 1612 to 1625 — CHARLES STUART, born 19th November, 1600, the first surviving son and heir apparent of the king, James I. became Duke of Cornwall on his brother's death. He ascended the throne 27th March, 1625, as Charles I., when all his honours merged in the crown.

XVI. 1629 — CHARLES JAMES STUART, Duke of Cornwall, first son and heir apparent of king Charles I., born 13th May, 1639, died the same day, when the dukedom lapsed to the crown.

XVII. 1630 to 1649 — CHARLES STUART, Duke of Cornwall, at his birth first surviving son and heir apparent of king Charles I., born 29th May, 1630, became king of England, *de jure*, by his father's official murder, 30th January, 1648/9, and, *de facto*, as Charles II., 29th May, 1660, when all his honours merged in the crown.

XVIII. 1688 to 1702 — JAMES FRANCIS EDWARD STUART, Duke of Cornwall at his birth, first surviving son and heir apparent of king James II., was born 10th June, 1688. By Act of Parliament, 2nd February, 1689/90, James II. was declared to have abdicated the throne, 11th December, 1688. On his father's death, 1701/2, the boy's succession to the Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland was acknowledged by Louis XIV. of France, and he was there proclaimed king. "In consequence thereof (at the age of 13!), he was *attainted* of high treason! under the title of '*the pretended Prince of Wales*,' 2nd March, 1701/2 (six days before the death of his successful uncle, William III.), whereby all his honours became forfeited."

XIX. 1714 to 1727 — *H.R.H.* GEORGE AUGUSTUS, the Prince of Great Britain, the first son and heir apparent of king George I., born 30th October, 1683, became Duke of Cornwall on the accession of his father to the throne, 1st August, 1714. He ascended the throne as George II., 11th June, 1727, when all his honours merged in the crown.

XX. 1727 to 1751 — *H.R.H.* FREDERICK LEWIS,[1] first son and heir of king George II., born 20th June, 1707, became Duke of Cornwall on the accession of his father to the throne, 11th June, 1727. He died 20th March, 1750/1, when the dukedom lapsed to the crown.

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[1] The popular estimation of this prince was embodied in a doggerel epitaph :—

"Here lies Fred,
Who was alive, and is dead.
Had it been his father,
I had much rather.
Had it been his brother,
Better than any other.
Had it been his sister,
No one would have missed her.
But, as it is only Fred,
Who was alive and is dead,
No more need be said."

XXI. 1762 to 1820 — *H.R.H.* GEORGE AUGUSTUS FREDERICK, first son and heir apparent of king George III.,[1] born 12th August, 1762, was Duke of Cornwall from his birth. He ascended the throne as George IV. 29th January, 1820, when all his honours merged in the crown.

XXII. 1841 to 1901 — *H.R.H.* ALBERT EDWARD, first son and heir apparent of Queen Victoria, born 9th November, 1841, was Duke of Cornwall from his birth. He ascended the throne as Edward VII. 22nd January, 1901.

XXIII. 1901 to 1910 — *H.R.H.* GEORGE FREDERICK ERNEST ALBERT, first surviving son and heir apparent of king Edward VII., born 3rd June, 1865, became Duke of Cornwall on his father's accession to the throne. He ascended the throne as George V. 6th May, 1910.

GOD SAVE THE KING.

XXIV. 1910 — *H.R.H.* EDWARD ALBERT CHRISTIAN GEORGE ANDREW PATRICK DAVID, eldest son and heir apparent of king George V., born 23rd June, 1894, became Duke of Cornwall on his father's accession to the throne.

GOD BLESS THE DUKE OF CORNWALL.

DEED OF SALE, REFERRED TO ABOVE (p. 51)

This Indenture made the four and Twentyeth day of March In the year of our Lord One thousand Six hundred and ffiftie BETWEENE Will: Steele Esqr Recorder of the Cittie of London Thomas Coke Will: Boscvile John Sparow Will: Henricke Ralph Harrison Will: Stott Sylvanes Taylor Tho: Hubbard Cornelius Cooke Esqrs: John Huntt Gentt and sir Edward Barkham Baronett being psons trusted by an Act of this psent pliame^t^: Intituled an Act of the Commons in pliam^t^: Assembled for sale of the Hono^s^: Mano^es^: and Lands heeretofore belonging to the Late Kinge Queene and Prince for the Conveying of such of the Lands Tenements and Hereditaments of the said Late King Queene and Prince as by the said Act are vested and settled in the said Trustees

[1] "George III., not being *filius Regis*, was consequently not Duke of Cornwall, and was the only instance, since the creation of the dukedom in 1336/7, of the heir apparent not *possessing* that dignity." —*Complete Peerage*, Vol. II., p. 374 note.

theire heires and assignes in such sort as in the said Act is menioned of the one pte AND Thomas Sanders of Pyehembury in the County of Devon Esqre And John Gorges of Pounsford in the Countie of Sommersett Esqre of the other parte WITNESSETH that the said Will: Steele Thomas Coke Will: Boscvill John Sparrow: Will: Henricke Ralph Harrison Will: Stott Sylvanes Taylor Thomas Hubbard Cornelius Cooke John Hunt and sir Edward Barkham IN Obedience to the said Act and by vertue thereof and in Execution of the powers and Trusts thereby Committed to them And att the desire and by the Warrant of sir Will: Roberts Knight John Whitte Nicholas Bond Nicholas Lampriers and John Humfrey Esq^res^ to Geather with others named in the said Act or any ffive or more of them are by the said Act authorized to contracte and agree for the sale of the said Landes Tenements and Hereditaments in such sort as in the said Act is menconed And in Consideration of the summe of Nyneteene Thousand ffive hundred and seaventeene poundes Eleaven shillings tenne pence ffarthing of Lawfull money of England Whereof for the full of the first Moyetie being Nine Thousand seaven hundred ffiftie Eight poundes ffifteene shillings Eleaven pence halfefarthing Thos: Andrewes Lord Maior of the said Cittie of London and Sir John Wollaston Knigh Alderman of the said Cittie of London Two of the Treasurers in that behalfe appoynted by the said Act have by writing under there hands bearing date the Two and Twentieth day of this Instant March now pouced by the said Tho: Saunders and John Gorges and Remayneing with them Certified to have beene paid and satisfied in such Maner as by the said Writting appeares And the other Moyetie is by the said Contract to bee paid or secured in such maner as is agreed. HAVE Granted Aliened Bargained and sold And by these psnts doe graunt Aliene bargaine and sell unto the said Tho: Saunders and John Gorges theire heirres and assignes ALL that the Manors Hono and Borough of Bradninch wth the Rights Members and appurtenances thereof sittuate lying and being in the County of Devon And allsoe all Quitt Rents Rents of assize Chife Rents old Rents ffree Rents Copiehold and Customarie Rents and all other Rents and yearely Sume and Summes of money to the said Hono: Mano: and Borough belonging or in any wise appertaining And alsoe all that peece or pcell of Land with the appurtenances Commonly called the Marsh Contayning by Estimation six Acres and halfe bee the same more or Lesse And alsoe all that Vesture or Sheere of two (Acres) of meadow in long meads with the appurtenances in the Tenure or occupation of Alexander

Gilles or his assigns And alsoe all that the vesture or sheere of one acre of Meadow ground with the appurtenances lying and being in longe Meade aforesaid now in the Tenure or occupation of Sammuell Sainthill or his assignes And alsoe all that the vesture or sheere of one Acre of Meadowground with the appurtents lying and being in Long Meade aforesaid now in the Tenure or occupation of Petter Wright his assigne or assignes And alsoe all that the vesture or sheere of one other Acre of Meadow ground with the appurtenances lying and being in the said Longmeade now in the tenure of occupation of Elizabeth Rowe widdowe or her assignes And alsoe all that Tenement with the appurtenances Commonly Called Battins lying and being within the said Mano: Contayning by Estimation Two and Thirty Acres be the same more or lesse now in the Tenure or occupation of Thomas Harcourt And alsoe all that other Tenement with the appurtenances Lying and being within the said Manor commonly Called Bythawin Contayning by Estimation Thirty Two Acres be the same more or lesse now or late in the Tenure or occupation of Henry Harecourt And alsoe all that other wth the apurtences Commonly Called Champerhayes wthin the said Mano: Contayning by Estimaton Sixty Acres be the same more or lesse now or late in the Tenure or occupation of John Crosse And alsoe all and singuler Coppiehold and Customarie Messuages Tenements Cottages Toftes Croftes Milles Houses Douehouse Edifices Structures Buildings Barnes stables Orchards Gardens and Courtilages Coppiehold and Customary Lands meadowes Leasnies Pastures ffeedings woods underwoods Timber Trees and other Trees Heathes Moores Marishes Comons grounds used for Comon Wastes wast Grounds Wayes Passages Easements, And alsoe all Courts Leete Courts Baron and other Courts whatsoever Services ffrannchises Customes Customeworkes fforfoetures Escheates Relises herriotts ffines Issues Amerciaments Perquissitts and profits of the said Courts and Leates and every one of them Goods and Chattells of ffelons and ffugitives ffelons of themselves Outlawed persons Clerks Convicted and psons put inexigent Wayfes Estrayes Deodanes Rivers Streames waters waters Courses wa res Dammes Stancks Millpoolles Hawkinge Hunting ffishing ffowling Rights Royaltys Jurisdiction Liberties priviledges Immunityes Profitts Comodities Advantages Emoliments possessions and Hereditaments Whatsoever there and every of there appurtenances of what nature or quality so ever they bee to the said Hono: Mano: Borough belonging or in any wise appertayning Which said Hono: Mano: and Borough Lands and premisses are mentioned in the pertikulars thereof

to have beene parcell of the possessions of Charles Stuarte Late Duke of Cornwall And to be of the present yearely vallue of Two hundred and three pounds ffive shillings and tenn pence ffarthing And to bee upon Improvement after the Expiracon of the severall and Respective Coppiehold Estates thereof in being of the yearely value of One thousand six hundred seaventye three pounds Eight shillings Eight pence over and above the said psent yearely vallue And alsoe all the woodes underwoode Timbertrees and other Trees standinge growing and being in and upon the said premisses which in the said particulars are menconed to be valued at Two hundred Ninetie pounds ffive shillings And the Revision and Reversions Remaynder and Remaynders of the said Mano: Hono: and Borough Lands and premisses and of every parte and psell thereof excepte and allwayes Reserved out of this psent Bargaine sale and Conveyance All Mano: Messuages Cottages and Landes parcell of the Mano: aforesaid And allsoe all Messuages Cottages and Landes percell of the Mano: and Borough aforesaid not pticularly menconed in the aforesaid pticular) other than Customary Landes or Tenements holden by Copie of Court Roll Comons and grounds used for Comons Wayes and Wast grounds And alsoe Except all Impropriaties parsonages appropriate Advowsons Rights of patronage or presentation unto any parsonage or vicariage or Church donative or presentative And all such other things as by the said Act are saved or excepted or appoynted to bee saved or Excepted or not to be sold TO HAVE AND TO HOLD the said Hono: Mano: and Borough Lands Tenements and Hereditaments and all and singular other the premisses heereby graunted Aliened bargained and sold or herein before menconed to be heereby graunted aliened bargained or sold wth theire and every of theire appurtences Excepte before Excepted unto

[*Here the deed breaks off.*]

CHAPTER III

THE MANOR

THE learned are not by any means agreed among themselves as to what account should be given of the ordering of society in this country in early times. With the Kelts it rested mainly on a tribal basis. But even among them forces were already at work which, modified by the influence of Roman customs, and the strong drift of the later tide of Teutonic immigrations,

Development of the Manor

opened up the way for the manorial system, which reached its height under Norman rule. When the invaders seized the land, they were obliged to keep together, for the purpose of defending themselves against the dispossessed Kelts. This led to the concentration of the people in tûns—a comprehensive term denoting communities of greater or lesser extent banded together for mutual protection under the patronage of a lord, or hláford, as he was called. The Saxon tûn and the Norman manor that succeeded it, had so much in common that the same general description applies equally to both. Each was an estate with a community upon it holding land by villein tenure under the jurisdiction of a lord.

We have already seen that the manor of Bradninch is mentioned in the *Exeter Domesday Book* as one of the

Domesday Record

forty-six manors held by William Capra in 1086.[1] The Domesday account has been translated into English by the reverend J. O. Reichel as follows[2]:—

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[1] See above, p. 30.

[2] Reichel's translation is taken from the text of the Exeter MS. and collated with the Exchequer MS.

> "W[illiam] Capra has a manor called Bradenesa [Bradninch] which Bristold (*Exch.* Brictuold) held T. R. E. and it paid geld fr 2½ hides. This 20 ploughs can till. Thereof W[illiam] has in demesne ½ hide, and 5 ploughs, and the villeins 1½ hides and 15 ploughs. There W[illiam] has 42 villeins, 16 bordars, 7 serfs, 3 rounceys,[1] 34 beasts, 8 swine, 324 sheep, 30 acres of wood-(land), 30 of coppice 33 of meadow, 200 acres of pasture, and 1 mill paying 5 shillings. This manor is worth 14 pounds; when he received it 100 shillings."[2]

The first impression made by this formal and short record is one of disappointment. But meagre as may seem the information to be gathered from it, it will be found to contain more than lies on the surface. We find in it that the lands forming the Saxon tûn in possession of Bristold on the 5th of January, 1066—"the day on which King Edward was alive and dead," as the quaint record has it—are the same lands which in the Norman survey of 1086 are held by William Capra, and are called the manor of Bradninch.

It is impossible indeed from the data before us to depict with certainty the condition of the manor as it was in 1086, or at any one point in the long-by-gone days that followed. But the patient researches of many learned men enable us to fill in the skeleton outline with touches which reproduce truthfully, as far as they go, the general appearance which the manor must have presented in the middle age.

The Lands of the Manor

The manor embraced the whole area of the parish, with the exception of the manor of Hele Payn and the half virgate of land which constituted the little estate of Garland's Hayes. The manor was divided into two unequal parts—the demesne, or home-farm of the lord, and the customary lands. These customary lands, so called from their being subject to the 'customs' of the

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[1] *I.e.* pack-horses.

[2] *Victoria County History*, p. 505.

manor, comprised the arable, pasture, meadow, and the waste or common lands. The arable land was divided into three large fields, which were tilled in regular triennial succession, one being ploughed in winter, another in lent, or spring, while the third lay for a year in fallow. These fields were again subdivided into smaller fields called shots, or furlongs. And each shot was laid out in narrow strips containing an acre, or half an acre, apiece. These strips, measured off by the rod[1] or pole with which the oxen in the plough were driven, were separated from each other by an unploughed balk of turf of the width of two furrows. The lew hollows of the combes supplied the pasture. The meadows along the course of the Culm yielded hay for winter feeding. And all the rest was wood or waste.

As Bradninch is a royal manor, the lord's demesne did not consist of a number of the acre strips scattered over the several shots, as was usual in other manors. It was detached from the open fields, and comprised what are now called the barton lands.[2]

Of these lands the 'Domesday Book' tells us that William Capra had in his home farm, as computed by Reichel, 128 acres, and the arable portion of the customary lands was 384 acres. To cultivate all this he had forty-two villeins, sixteen bordars, and seven serfs.

All the lands of the manor, whether demesne or customary, were the property of the lord, who permitted the villeins, bordars, and serfs to live upon it in return

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[1] "In driving the oxen the ploughman would use an ox-goad, a long rod shod with iron, with the sharp point of which the oxen were pricked to hasten their pace. The most convenient length of the goad . . . is 16½ feet, the conventional length of the rod, pole, or perch."—HONE, *The Manor*, pp. 42-3.

[2] The lands held by the lord in demesne were called 'the barton,' a common Devonshire name for a large farm. And when these lands were converted into copyhold the several tenements were called 'the barton lands.' These 'barton lands' were not subject to the 'customs' of the manor, and were not heritable.

for their labour. The conditions, however, of their occupation were different for each class.

The Villein

The villein, in addition to his dwelling house, had assigned to him a fixed number of strips in the open fields, which carried with it a share of the meadow and of the profits of the waste, together with "liberty to take estovers."[1] He dwelt, not on the land, but in the town, where he had his homestead, "a messuage with toft and croft," *i.e.*, a dwelling house with an open space around, and a small field. His holding in the common fields was a virgate or yardland,[2] about thirty acres, not united together in one continuous farm, but made up, as a rule, of ten acre strips, or twenty half-acre strips, in each of the three arable fields. And these strips in the several fields did not lie beside each other. They were distributed, one in the 'run-rig' of this shot, another in the 'run-rig' of that shot.

For the use of this land he rendered three-fold service. He paid for it in labour, in money, and in kind. Of these three the labour payment was much the heaviest burden. The service of labour which he owed to his lord was divided into 'week-work' and 'boon-work.' In discharge of the 'week-work' he was bound to labour for the lord two or three days a week throughout the year, With his own plough, and his own oxen, he had to plough his lord's home-farm, or demesne. He had to harrow in the seed, to reap the corn, to carry it, to thresh it. He had to keep the fences in order, to shear the sheep, to mend the plough, to do the haulage of the manor, in fact, to do whatever his lord required of him. And even if he had completed in this way the full tale of labour-days comprised in his 'week-work,'

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[1] *I.e.* the liberty of taking from the land wood necessary for the repair of house, hedge, cart, plough, and other implements of husbandry.

[2] Hence he was sometimes called a virgater, or yardlander.

he was liable to be called on for such additional labour as the lord's home-farm, or demesne, might demand in harvest, or in other times of pressure.[1] All this service of labour to the lord was a first charge on the villein tenant's time. What remained over was at his disposal for the tilling of his own yard-land.

In money, besides a small fixed rent, called 'rent of assise,' he had to pay certain dues. These dues were two-fold. Some were levied in return for the profit which he derived from the privilege of using the waste or common land of the manor. These were a trivial impost. Other dues were levied as the price of services owed, but commuted for a money payment. Dues of this class increased more and more as time went on. But they were not felt to be burdensome, because each addition to them purchased further exemption from the oppressive service of labour. The payment in kind consisted of contributions of chicken, eggs, and honey for the table of the lord of the manor. Unless this payment was exacted, in the lord's absence, by his underlings for their own use, I imagine it cannot, at any time, have been a very serious tax upon the villein tenants of the manor of Bradninch.

The Bordar

The bordar[2] was so called from the bord or cot which he occupied. The bord had attached to it a small curtilage or courtyard, and five or six acres in the arable fields. In return for this the bordar's 'week-work' amounted to one day in the week, except in times of urgency, when he was called on for 'boon-work,' to sow or weed the lord's lands, to shear his sheep, to gather in his harvest, or to thresh his corn. He was a poorer man than the villein tenant, but he was also more independent. And as he had more time at his disposal, he was able to earn

[1] *The Manor*, p. 54.
[2] The name bordar gave place before long to that of cottager.

money by offering himself as a hired labourer to those of his neighbours who required his help.

The Serf

Servitude was an institution among the Anglo-Saxons from the earliest times. The serf and his children were the mere chattels of his master.[1] In theory the law permitted the master to do with his slave as he would, even to the limit of taking his life. But in practice the lot of the slave was not so desperate as it seems. As soon as the master became a Christian, his heart was softened towards the man whom he was taught to regard no longer as a tool, but as a brother dependent upon him. As Christian views of slavery gradually gained ground, their influence began to mould the laws.[2] The slave became entitled to his daily rations of two loaves of bread. If he worked on Sunday at his master's command, *ipso facto* he became free. Facilities were provided to enable him to purchase his own freedom and that of his children.[3]

The majority of the serfs had been born in a state of slavery. Their forefathers were either Roman slaves, British prisoners of war, or other captives. The rest had been free men who were reduced to slavery as the penalty for debt or evil-doing. The master had the right of selling a serf in the country, but not beyond the sea, even if he were a criminal. In other respects the condition of the servile seems to have differed little from that of the indigent free.[4] The serfs were either menials in Capra's household, or else they occupied cottages with small plots of ground attached to them. The slavery of this class soon vanished under the influence of Christianity, and within a century after the

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[1] STUBBS, *Const. Hist.*, p. 78.
[2] *Christianity Judged by its Fruits*, pp. 98 *sq.*
[3] STUBBS, *Const. Hist.*, p. 79.
[4] LAPPENBERG'S *Anglo-Saxon Kings*, translated by THORPE, Vol. II., p. 321.

Domesday Survey, the serfs themselves were merged in the class of cottagers.

The following 'extent' of the lord the King's Manor of Bradeneche, made in 1303/4 gives a minutely detailed account of the condition of the estate at that time:—

Ancient Extents, Exchequer K. R. No. 79 (7).

Writ.

Edward, by the Grace of God, King of England, Lord of Ireland, and Duke of Aquitaine to the sheriff of Devon, greeting. For certain causes we command you that having associated with you our very dear clerk Thomas de Sweneseia, Warden of our mine in the county aforesaid, by the oath of true and lawful men of your bailiwick, by whom the truth of the matter can be the better known, in the presence of the same Thomas, you cause to be extended, the Manor of Bradeneche in the said county, that is to say how much it is worth by the year in all its issues, saving the services therefrom due to the chief lords of that fee. And the extent thereof distinctly and openly made, do you have at our exchequer, at York, in 15 days from Easter day, under your seal and the seals of those by whom it shall be made, together with this writ.

Witness W. de Carleton, at York, the 4th day of February in the 32nd. year of our reign. [A.D. 1303-4.]

[ON THE BACK]:—

Having associated with me Thomas de Sweynesia I made an extent of the lord the king's manor of Bradeneche; which said extent is sewn to this writ.

BRANEYS. Extent of the manor there made before Thomas de Ralegh, sheriff of Devon having associated with him Thomas de Swenesie, clerk of the lord the King in the county aforesaid, by the oath of John Yllere, William Dyer (Tynctor) Robert Snoublouth, Pain de Hele, William Norman, Samson de Braneys, Roger de Hele, Gilbert Seger, William Fresset, Ralph de Comb, Robert Seger and Reginald Gaysser.

Who say that there is there on the chief site, a certain house out of repair, worth nothing beyond its upkeep.

Item; there is a certain garden, worth *2s* by the year.

Item; there are 24½ acres of meadow which are worth by the year 28*s.* 7*d.* the worth of the acre 14*d.*

Item; they say that the pasture of the park is worth by the year with the pannage[1] 100*s*—wherefrom the vicar of the church of the same place receives by the year for a tenth 10*s.*

Item; they say that there is a lake for a certain fishpond, but whether it is stocked with fishes or not they know not, and they say that after the death of the Countess of Cornwall, no one appropriated the same, nor its courses.

Item; they say that there are there free tenants who render by the year 12*s*; villeins who render by the year 14*l.* 7*d.* of whom . . . . . 4 . . . . . from the tenants of Nicholas de Bythewynde who hold in villeinage.

Item; the land of Clystwyck renders by the year 20*s.*

Item ——— renders by the year 10*s.*

Item; a certain Richard de [Boge] hull renders by the year 20*s.*

Item; they say that a certain land of Boghehull is in the hand of the lord the King by reason that a certain bond tenant of the King, the lord of the manor aforesaid, took to wife the heir of the said land, and it is worth by the year 3*s.*

Item; they say that the land of Hunschane, which at one time . . . . . and in the hand of Sir John de . . . . . Edmund formerly the Earl of Cornwall . . . . . prohibited by reason of putting that land in demesne, because Henry Fitz Comte predecessor of the said Earl Edmund gave that land to a certain Henry, son of the King, and Joan de Campo Arnulph, and the heirs of their bodies, who died without issue.

Item; they say that all the land of the demesne is worth by the year 23*s.* 1*d.*

Item; they say that the labour-service of the villeins is worth by the year 45*s.* 5*d.*

Item; the payment in kind of the same is worth by the year 3*s.* 4*d.*

Item; the berbiage[2] of the same is worth by the year 2*s.*

Item; the orchard of the same is worth by the year 6*d.*

Item; the mowing of the meadow is worth by the year 5*s.* 10*d.*

Item; the fishery there is worth by the year 18*d.*

Item; there is there a certain water-mill for the smiths which is worth by the year 12*d.*

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[1] *I.e.*, the money paid for the privilege of turning swine into the woods.

[2] Rent paid in sheep.

Item; there are there two water-mills which are worth by the year 4*l.*

Item; they say that the lady Margaret Countess of Cornwall, holds in the name of dower the independent Courts of the Honor of the Manor aforesaid which are wōrth by the year 40*s.*; and she holds the advowson of the Church of the place, as dower, which is worth by the year 20*s.* Being questioned if the aforesaid countess has in the name of dower, all the fees of the aforesaid Honor with the reliefs, or not—they say that they do not know, nor do they know the number of the fees to her assigned in dower. They well know for certain, however, that the lord's bailiffs usurped all the fees for themselves, notwithstanding the claims of the steward of the lord the King there.

Item; they say that the perquisites of the courts of the Manor are worth by the year 12*s.*

FARM OF THE BOROUGH. *Item*; they say ——————— are worth 10*d.* Whereupon Thomas de Swenesia, steward of the said manor, as is aforesaid ..... 14*s.* rent of 28 burgages taken (assumptis) from the villeins. And further the same Thomas ——————— 12 burgages and 2*d.* rent of villeins in the aforesaid year ..... Sum of the whole rent of the burgages 4*l.* 8*s.* Whereof one villein renders at Easter term of the same year.

Item; there is there a certain house with a curtilage which an escheat of the lord the Earl after the death of John le Someter which is worth by the year 4*s.* 6*d.* without the costs of the same house.

Item; they say that the fair on the day of St. Denis together with the perquisites of the court of the fair, is worth by the year 20*s.*

[ON THE BACK]:—

Let that Manor be committed to John de Todelegh, to keep at the will [of the lord] so that he answer for the issues from the feast of Easter in the 32nd year so that the true value of the same being seen at the aforesaid Treasury by the account and other issues it can be committed to him at a certain farm.

We may fairly picture to ourselves the peasantry of the manor of Bradninch as a mixed class of tenantry, including a large free element—the full villein with his thirty acres, the semi-villein with fifteen, the cottar with

some five, "and thus through several gradations down to the man with his 'farthing dole,' or parcel of land containing a quarter of an acre."[1]

Status of the Peasantry

The status of these several classes of tenants was very various. Among them were many of the Saxon ceorls, who retained their old freedom[2]; others of them, accepting under the Norman manorial system the important privilege of the lord's protection, *ipso facto* sank into an unfree condition. These were called by the Norman name of villein, men bound to the vill by service of labour. The law gave them no rights against their lord. If they quitted the manor without his leave, he could reclaim them. In strictness they had no legal right to hold property.[3] Nevertheless they were not slaves to be bought and sold. They were not at the mercy of the lord's arbitrary will. They were protected by the customs of the manor. And as we shall see, these customs were interpreted by the manor court.

The condition of the villein, moreover, tended continually to improve. And he was able by degrees to commute his 'week-work' and 'boon-work' for money payments. By this means indeed many villeins had been able to purchase immunity from service before the memorable year 1348. The more prosperous among them aimed at still greater emancipation, and struggled to become owners of land themselves. Labour-service became more and more unpopular. Hired labour was the only labour to be had, and the lords found themselves in great straits for the cultivation of their home-farms. Quite suddenly the supply of labour ceased altogether, for there fell upon England such a visitation

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[1] *The Manor*, pp. 45-6.

[2] The ceorl was the 'freeman,' in opposition both to the noble or military class, and to the unfree or servile."—THORPE, Vol. II., p. 318.

[3] ELLIS, *Introd. to Domesday*, Vol. I., p. 75.

as had never before been seen in the world. The terrible plague known as the Black Death swept across Europe from the East, and descended upon these shores in 1348. In an incredibly short time more than one half the population was swept away. Sixty thousand perished at Norwich alone. Fifty thousand were buried in one grim spot in London.[1] This scourge wrought a marked change in the condition of the tillers of the soil. It carried off so many of the poorest of the people that the supply of labour became exceedingly scarce. The rate of wages rose as much as 50 or 60 per cent. Statutes were passed with a view of keeping them down. It was enacted that every man and woman not having of his own whereof he may live, should be bound to serve the employer who required him, and should ask only the wages which were customary two years before the plague began—a law impossible to enforce, for corn had risen to so high a price that the old wages would not have bought enough to keep a man alive. The labourer was forbidden to quit the parish where he lived in search of better pay, and the run-away was branded on the forehead with a hot iron. But all these retrograde efforts to annul the force of economic laws were as water poured out. A fundamental change in the relations hitherto subsisting between landlord and tenant had taken place, and there was no undoing it. The cost of working an estate was doubled, or even trebled, by the altered state of affairs. With the increased price of labour there was a corresponding rise in the price of implements of husbandry, and the tenants were unable to work their farms at a profit sufficient to meet the money rentals which they had with

[1] Those who died of the plague at Bradninch were buried, not in the churchyard, but at a distance from the town, on a piece of land which is marked on Simpson's map as 'Old Graveyard.' It is a triangular enclosure (113), containing 1 a. 1 r. 24 p., on the slope of the hill leading down to Waterstave, with some Scotch firs in the northern angle.

such eager hope substituted for their former labour-services. This led to a universal lowering of rents, and in the end the lords were content to give up the cultivation even of their demesne lands to their tenants.[1]

After a time legislation itself began to change its attitude. The villein, who in the thirteenth century was held at the will of his lord, and had no redress for his grievances, from the year 1468 found the king's courts of both law and equity ready to interfere on his behalf.

These changes made everywhere for the liberation of the villein from the bondage of customary services. And the particular circumstances of the manor of Bradninch were such as tended to further that end. The lord was an absentee. He had, therefore, no personal interest in exacting the service of labour as such. It was enough for him if the lands of the manor were duly tilled, and if he received from them a reasonable return. But what was much more in favour of the customary tenant of this manor was the fact that his lord was either the king's son, or the king himself. Royalty has always been a good master. And at Bradninch the tenantry of all classes were relieved at the earliest date from the galling yoke of oppressive services. No trace of them remained when Hooker, describing the manor, put it on record that every man took "of the lord, or of his depute, his holdinge, or bargayne for such fyne as he can make his agrement for the same."[2]

Before the days of Elizabeth the lord's demesne—*i.e.*, the barton lands—was granted out to free tenants to hold by military, or other, service, or at a rental. I find among the tenants at Bradninch before the sixteenth century, besides the Sainthills, the family of Hobbs,[3] whose arms were sa. three escutcheons az. charged with three eglets displayed or; and of Payget, who bore sa.

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[1] *The Manor*, p. 55. [2] *Harl. MS.* 5827, p. 136[1].

[3] Cecilie Hobbs was buried here on the 23rd of July, 1570. Since then I find no entry of the name in the registers.

a cross engrailed between four eglets arg. on the cross four lions passant gardant of the first.[1] It seems probable that both these families held by military service.

By slow degrees the status of the tillers of the soil had been revolutionized. The occupation of the villein tenant, from being an occupation at the mere pleasure of the lord, grew into a tenure by right, recognised first by custom, and afterwards by law. And the man whom Ellis describes as being in "a state superior to downright slavery, but inferior to every other condition," emerged at last as a free and independent copyholder.

The business of the manor was administered by a staff of officers—the steward, the bailiff, and the reeve.

The Steward of the Manor

At the head of all things in the manor, as representing its royal lord, was the steward, a man of high position, oftentimes a celebrity living at a distance, as, for instance, the three men who held the office in the reign of Elizabeth, lord Hastings, Francis, earl of Bedford, and sir Walter Ralegh. Each of these took a prominent place among the history makers of his time.

Lord Hastings

Lord Hastings, a man of noble birth, was ardently devoted to the papal cause. When Edward VI. was dying, in 1553, the duke of Northumberland, either not knowing, or forgetting, this, sent him to raise four thousand foot in Buckinghamshire, to secure the succession of lady Jane Grey to the throne in the interest of the Reformation. On the king's death Hastings revealed his true colours, and declared for queen Mary, who received him at once into favour, and showered wealth and honours upon him. Amongst other offices he held that of warden of the stanneries, that is, of the tin mines of Cornwall and Devon, a post which carried with it the stewardship of the manor of Bradninch. As a member of the council he was concerned to some extent in the religious

[1] *Harl. MS.* 5827, pp. 151, 154[1].

persecutions of the reign, and he so completely won the confidence of the queen, that she made him one of her executors. As her master of the horse he had held her bridle at her coronation, as she rode through the streets of London from the Temple to Westminster. And at her death he was one of the lords appointed to escort queen Elizabeth on her entrance into London. But shortly afterwards he was imprisoned in the Tower for hearing mass. He sued to the council for pardon, willingly took the oath of supremacy, and was released from prison. He retired to his estates at Stoke Poges, where he built a hospital and a chapel, and there ended his days in devotion in 1573.

Francis, Duke of Bedford

Francis Russell, second earl of Bedford, was one of the forty who were created knights of the Bath at the coronation of Edward VI. He was member of parliament for Buckinghamshire, and is said to have been the first heir to a peerage who sat in the House of Commons. In contrast to lord Hastings, Francis Russell was devoted to the cause of the Reformation. His name appears, with his father's, as witnessing the ineffective deed by which Edward VI. settled the crown on lady Jane Grey. After Mary's accession he was imprisoned in the Fleet on account of his faith. He occupied his enforced leisure in strenuous efforts to place Elizabeth on the throne. And when he finally effected his escape, he joined the exiled reformers in Geneva. On Elizabeth's accession he was at once sworn of the privy council, and took an active part in the religious settlement.

He became warden of the east marshes and governor of Berwick, and was ordered to keep a large force ready to over-awe the adherents of Mary, queen of Scots. The high esteem in which he was held by his royal mistress sometimes cost him dearly, for she honoured him more than once by inviting herself and her enormous retinue to visit him at his country seat at Chenies and Woburn Abbey. He died in 1585.

The third steward of the manor in the reign of Elizabeth—sir Walter Ralegh—was a Devonshire man, born about 1552 at Hayes, or Hayes Barton, near Budleigh Salterton. At the early age of seventeen he began to seek adventure, by joining the Huguenot army in France as a volunteer. He was a tall, handsome, dashing man, of a fine presence, a plausible tongue, a stout heart, and a sound head. He was always magnificently attired. And there is nothing improbable in the story of his spreading his new plush cloak over a muddy road for the queen to walk upon. The evidence upon which it is based is shadowy; but the incident is in keeping with Ralegh's quick decided resolution; and it is certain that he sprang with a sudden bound into royal favour, and within a few years was raised from the position of a poor gentleman adventurer to be one of the most wealthy of the courtiers. In 1585 he was appointed warden of the stanneries, which brings him into our history. His jurisdiction of the stanneries marked an era of reform, and the rules laid down by him continued long in force. His adventurous nature yearned to widen its field of action, and he spent large sums in fitting out vessels with which to explore the new world across the seas. Elizabeth refused to allow him to leave the country. But he was not to be daunted; and his ships sailed on their quest without him. The issue of the adventure was the eventual establishment of the first English colony, which in honour of the queen he called Virginia. And it is Ralegh's chief claim to fame that he, "first of Englishmen, pointed out the way to the formation of a greater England beyond the seas." He is, however, more popularly known as the introducer into England about 1586 of potatoes and tobacco. The potatoes brought back from Virginia by his servant Harriot, were undoubtedly the first planted in this country. Their cultivation spread rapidly in Ireland, but was uncommon in England until the eighteenth century.

Sir Walter Ralegh

Tobacco had been cultivated in Portugal before 1560, and was known in England before 1576. Drake and Hawkins seem to have first brought the leaf to England from America; but Ralegh was the first Englishman of rank to smoke it. He soon became confirmed in the habit, and taught his fellow-courtiers to follow his example, presenting to them pipes with bowls of silver. The practice spread with amazing rapidity among all classes of the nation. It is to Ralegh also that we owe the introduction of mahogany into this country.

His brilliant life ended in disgrace and tragedy. He incurred the implacable vengeance of the queen, who sent him to the Tower. He fared no better under James I., whose claim to the throne he had opposed in favour of Arabella Stewart. He lost his offices, his estates, his wealth, his liberty, and last of all his head, bravely and cheerfully facing death on the scaffold in 1618.

We feel a certain complacent satisfaction that we have been brought into touch with the greater world through such men as these. They did not indeed preside in person at the manor court held in Bradninch. But it is not too much to say that, whatever was done there, they were the doers of it.

The Deputy Steward

The steward had a local deputy—a Peter Sainthill, an Amyas Paulet, an Edward Yard, an Adam Martin, or a John Hooker—who in turn had power to appoint a substitute to act for him in his absence. But the deputy acted on the steward's warrant, and registered his fiat.

Sir Amyas Paulet

Of these the most important was sir Amyas Paulet (1536-88), the son of Hugh Paulet, governor of Jersey. He began his official life as his father's lieutenant, and afterwards succeeded him as governor of the island. A convinced Puritan, he distinguished his rule by repressing the practice of Romanism, and he offered ostentatious protection to the Huguenot refugees from France. In 1575 he was sent as ambassador to the French court. He

regarded the movements of the Huguenots with keen sympathy, and corresponded with his government copiously, if not enthusiastically, on the proposal to marry the duc d'Alençon to queen Elizabeth. . . . He was made a privy councillor, and nominated to the responsible office of keeper of Mary queen of Scots, who was then queen Elizabeth's prisoner at Tutbury. . . . Paulet's instructions are not extant, but it is known that he was directed to treat his prisoner with far greater severity than Sadler, her latest warder, had employed. Her correspondence was to be more carefully inspected; her opportunities of alms-giving were to undergo limitation; she was to be kept in greater seclusion, and less regard was to be paid to her claims to maintain in her household the etiquette of a court. Queen Mary protested against the selection of Paulet; she feared his puritanical fervour, and urged that while in Paris he had shewn marked hostility to her agents there. Elizabeth retorted in an autograph letter that he had done his duty. Paulet's attitude to his prisoner was from the first courteous but firm, and her frequent complaints left him unmoved. Mary's friends and agents urged her to bring all her charms to bear on Paulet, and to promise him the highest honours and dignities when, by his connivance, she should come to her own again. But Paulet declined to neglect his duty through "hope of gain, fear of loss, or any private respect whatever." He acquiesced in the arrangements by which the government managed to inspect the queen's private papers. On pretence of enabling her to take part in a staghunt he sent her for a fortnight to sir Walter Aston's house at Tixall. In her absence her coffers were searched, and their contents, including not only letters, but many of her jewels, were seized. Moreover, in accordance with orders from London, Paulet took possession of his prisoner's money, and he finally removed her to Fotheringay to stand her trial. After her condemnation he treated her with far less ceremony than before, and

urged, in letters to Walsingham and Burghley, with a pertinacity that became at times almost grotesque, the need of executing her without delay. Secretary Davison sent by letter to Paulet plain hints that he might safely murder Mary privately, and thus relieve queen Elizabeth of the distasteful task of signing her death-warrant. Paulet at once replied that he could not perform "an act which God and the law forbiddeth."

Mary's execution at Fotheringay on 8th February, 1586/7, brought Paulet's duties to an end. Elizabeth, who had frequently corresponded with him on familiar terms while he was in charge of Mary, expressed full satisfaction with his performance of his difficult task. On 4th January, 1587/8 he attended a privy council, and signed orders directing Romanist recusants to be dealt with stringently. He died in London on 26th September, 1588, and was buried there in the church of St. Martin's-in-the-Fields. When that church was rebuilt, his remains were removed, together with the monument, to the parish church of Hinton S. George, the family seat in Somersetshire.

I had the good fortune to rescue from a heap of rubbish, destined to light the Guildhall fire, a somewhat dingy old MS. It is a "Transcript or Note" of warrants addressed by the stewards Hastings, Bedford, and Ralegh to their deputies. These warrants are interesting, not only as specimens of the official letter-writing of the time, but also as throwing light upon the management of the manor. I subjoin a few of them in full:—

Warrants from the Stewards

After my hartty comendacions where by my warrant directed to Peter Seinthill then my Deputy Stewarde of the Queenes manor Bradninch the Revcion of a Tent wth thapprtences called Stoukhouse in the ocupacion of William Wike for terme of his life was by copye of Court-roule acordinge to the custome of the saide manor granted to John Hoper for terme of his life And the Queenes matie answered of the some of v £ fyne for the same I being

A stranger Stouckhouse fyne v £

now informed that the saide John Hoper is contented to passe over his saide estate and interest in the same to one Mary Sinthill, one of the daughter of the aforsaide Peter Seinthill, So as the Queens matie may receav cõmodetye by the saide exchange This is therfor to require you at the next Courte to be holden within the saide manor to admitt the saide Marye Tenant in stede of the saide Hoper yf you fynde that the saide hoper be so contented and agreed as I am informed he is, And to make her oute a Copye acordinge to the Custome of the said manor And for thexchange of the same, to take order that the Queenes matie maye be answered of xx^{s} fyne and this shalbe your warrant in that behalfe from westnd the viiith of february 1567.

xx^{s} fyne for exchange

Your loving frind
EDWARD HASTINGES.

To the right worshipfull and my loving frind Amies Poulet esquier my Deputy Steward of the Queenes maties manor of Bradninch in Devon, and in his absence to his substitute there.

After my right hartty comendacions where I u[nderstand] that it is now lawfull for me to graunt for the pñte of [the] Quene's matie the Revcion of eight Acres of grown[d in] Bradninche called Barton Land the wch pntly John Tw[igge] holdeth for terme of his lyfe This is to let you under[stand] that at the peticion of the same John Twigge I have granted the Revcon thereof to three of his children acordinge to the custome of the said manor Requiring you at the next Courte there to be holden after the receit hereof to receav of him their names, and to admitt them Tenantes in Revcion and acordingly takinge order that the accustomed fyne wch by the booke of Srvaye of the sayde manor apeereth to be three powndes sixe shillinges eight pence, may be trewly answered unto the Queene's maties use, and this psnte shalbe your sufficient warrant and discharge in that behalfe Dated at westend the iide daye of May 1567

Your loving frende
EDWARD HASTINGS.

To the Right worshipfull and my lovinge frende Amies Poulet Esquier my Deputy Steward of the Queene's matie's manor of Bradninch in Devon or in his absence to his Deputy there,

Elizabeth Twigge
Johan Twigge
James Twigge
} Children of the saide John are named Tenants to the said Revcion.

It will be noticed that, in the first case Hastings grants the reversion of John Hooper's holding to a new tenant with whom Hooper has himself made a direct agreement. And in the case of John Twigge's holding, the new tenants are his own children. These warrants shew Hastings as a conscientious administrator. I print another letter which shews him to be a considerate and kindly man :—

> After my moste hartty comendacions, where I understand by a lettre from Sr John Pollard that one William Budge and Margaret Atwell now wife of one Walter Morgan havinge a Tenam̄t within the Queenes matie manor of Bradninche the wch they holde by copye of Court roule, for term of their lives, wch saide Tenemt to reliev their necesseties they beinge fallen into povertye there peticion is to have my assent to make sale of unto Thome Capston & Peter Capston upon condicion to assure them the like estate of the prmisss duringe their lives. No I am willinge in respect of their poverties to doe my goodwill to reliev it so not knowinge whether it be of Barton holde or custoudy nor what lawfully I may doe therein Therefor I praye you to call the pties before you and to consyder of the custome of that holde and fynding that I may lawfully satisfye their peticion without breach of custome I require you to doe it, and this shalbe your warrant, and finding likwyse that I maye not orderly so grant it, I pray you to advertise unto me of some cause to the contrarye, so I bid you hartely farwell from my house nere Leycester the vth of October 1567
>
> Your assured friende
> EDWARD HASTINGES.
>
> To the right worshipfull and my very loving frende Mr. Amies Poulet esquier my Deputy Steward of the Queene's maties manor of Bradninch in Devon, or in his absence to his Substitute within the saide manor.

The nomination of a new tenant was not always such direct and straightforward agreement, as witness the next warrant :—

> After my right hartty comendacione where I understand that it is lawfull for me to grant for the pofite of the Queenes matie the Rewcion of a fullinge myll in Bradninche wth vi

Acres of arable lande and two of meddow to the same belonginge the wch pntly Elizabeth Moore the wife of John Battye and John Moore her sone doe holde for terme of their lives This is to let you understand that I have granted the Rewcion to Edward Sexton my servant willing you that ether in his owne name or wth whomesoever he shall compound for the same that at the next Courte folowinge ye admitt them Tenants makinge them out a Copye acordinge to the Custome of the saide manor foreseing that the acustomed fyne for the same maye be dewly answered unto the Queenes maties use the wch fyne as I am enformed amountes to fyve poundes And theies psentes shalbe your sufficiente warrant & discharge in that behalf from my house in Leistre streht the vth of November 1567

Your loving frind
EDWARD HASTINGES.

To the right worshipfull and my very loving frinde Amies Poulet esquier my deputy Steward of the Queenes maties manor of Bradnynche in Devon and in his absence to his substitute there.

John Battyn
Wilmot Moore } are named Tennts to the saide Rewsion.
John Bennett

The grant of the reversion is not here made directly to the persons whose names ultimately appear on the court roll. A middle-man—"Edward Sexton, my servant"—is introduced. This introduction of the middle-man is quite common under Hastings and Bedford. Here is another case:—

"To his frind mr. Adam Martyn now at Bradninche. Whereas there is as I am informed the rewciones of waterleis & Rowmoke now in the tenure of Henry Warren w^e^ rewciones are lawfull for me to grant acording to the custome of the manor of Bradninch wherof the same is pcell by copie for two lyves in rewcion acording to the custome of the saide manor so as the Queene may receav fyne acordingly these shalbe therefor to signefie unto you that I have granted & hereby doe grant to my servant Roger Potter the rewcione of the saide pmisses to him and to his Assignes willing & requiring you at the next Courte there to be holden to admitt him the saide Roger or his Assigne or Assignes tenante in rewcione to the pmisses acording to the custome of the saide manor & these my

letres shalbe your sufficient warrant & discharge in that behalf geven under my hand & seall the second daye of Decem in the xxith yere of the Renghn of o^r soveraigne Ladie Elizabeth Anno Dm 1578.

FFRANCE BEDFORD,

To my very trusty servant Edward Yard esquier and to my lovinge frind Adam Martyn understeward of the Queene's mtie manor of Bradninch or to ether of them.

Richard Warren
Katheren Warren
children of the
saide Henry Warren } wre nomated for the rewcion abovsaide."

The middle-man was not always the servant of the steward. He was sometimes the servant of a friend:—

After my hartty comd where one Richard Lennigton holdeth one Tenemt called waterstaffe contayn by estim xxxtie acres of land pcell of the Q ma^ties manor of Bradninch now or late in the tenure of the saide Richard for term of his life the rewcion of wh saide tenemt wt the aptenance I have for divers consideraciones geven and granted unto Thome Donyhtie gent servant to my very good Lorde the Erle of Essex & to his Assignes as the custome of the saide manor dothe pmitte fr terme of lyfe or lyves or otherwise These shalbe therfore to will & require you at the next Courte there to be holden after the receit of this my warant to admitt him the saide Thome or suche his Assignes or Assignes Tennt or Tennts of the pmisses wth the aptenance in as ample and beneficiall maner as the custome of the saide manor will pmitt taking order that the Q ma^ties fyne acustomed may be to her highnes use dulye answered and paid and these my lettres shalbe your sufficiente warant & discharge in that behalf geven at London this last of Aprill in the eightenthe yere of the Reigne of sovereign Ladye Elizabeth by the grace of God Q of england ffrac & Ire defend of the faithe Ao Domini 1576.

FFRANCE BEDFORD.

To my very good frinde Sr Amis Poulet Knight deputie steward of the Q ma^tie manor of Bradninch & in his absence to his substitute there.

Richard warren the sonne of Thome warren was nominated to the rewcion abovesaide.

This system of granting reversions to a servant "in his owne name or with whomsoever he shall compound for the same," "to him and to his Assignes," opened a very wide door for abuses. And there can be no doubt that, in order to procure their nomination to the reversion, the new tenants had not only to pay "the accustomed fyne to be dewly answered unto the Queen's maties use," but also to buy out the middle-man on the best terms that they could make with him.

The Bailiff

Next in rank to the steward was the bailiff or beadle. He, too, in a subordinate position, represented the lord within the limits of the manor. He collected the rents and services from the villeins, gathered in the lord's crops, and kept an account of receipts and expenses. He was sometimes a man of such position as to be chosen high sheriff of the county. His office armed him with despotic powers, and the court rolls prove that he was sometimes nothing loth to use them to the full. One Roger de Prideaus, or Roger Prideaux, as we should call him to-day, was bailiff in the reigns of Henry III. and Edward I.

On one occasion his conduct was the subject of official inquiry. The twelve good men and true appointed to examine into the matter declared on their oath, according to the long-winded phraseology of the rolls:—

> "That the same Roger de Prideaus, while he was sheriff of Devon, did on the Tuesday next after the Feast of S. Michael, the Archangel, in the 56th year of King Henry (29th September, 1272) arrest and imprison Henry Cornubiensis, of Greneslinch, without preferring any indictment against him. And heedless of the said Henry's proposal to submit his conduct to fair inquiry, and to give bail, the said Roger de Prideaus took from him 46s. and 8d., unjustly, and without judgment, before he could go out of prison, to the damage of the said Henry of one hundred shillings."

Unfortunately, the bailiff did not turn over a new leaf with the new reign. For another jury found:—

"That the said Roger de Prideaus, when sheriff, did by the hands of Alexander of Braneys, and Gilbert Esger, on the Thursday next after Assumption of the blessed Mary, in the first year of the reign of King Edward (15th August, 1273) seize, as estrays, certain cattle of Henry de Kylrington: to wit, eight oxen, and ten head of cattle, feeding at their ease in Colbrooke, and drove the same to Bradninch, and there detained them, as security for costs. Whereupon the said Henry wished to release his estrays aforesaid, under writ of the aforesaid Roger, at that time sheriff, according to the law and custom of the realm of England. And the said Roger, at that time sheriff, would not release them, but detained them, until the aforesaid Henry paid the aforesaid Roger 40s. without judgment."

I shrewdly suspect that Kylrington's cattle, on the occasion of this their first visit to Bradninch, must have created a good impression there. For once more an inquiry was held concerning the aforesaid incorrigible Roger de Prideaus, bailiff of the manor of Bradninch, and ex-sheriff of Devon. We read that the twelve men:—

"Say that he, on Monday next before the Feast of the Apostles, SS. Simon and Jude, in the second year of the reign of King Edward (28th October, 1274), did by the hands of Alexander of Braneys, seize, as estrays, certain cattle of the aforesaid Henry, in Colebrok:—to wit, eight yoked oxen, plough and all, along with the whole of the gear appertaining thereto, stick, goad, and coulter, and sixteen head of cattle feeding at their ease: and he drove the aforesaid oxen and estrays to the park of the lord Edmund, earl of Cornwall, at Bradninch: and the land of the said Edmund, with the aforesaid oxen and plough aforesaid, ploughed, from the aforesaid Monday for the six weeks next following, unjustly,[1] and without judgment. And the aforesaid Henry wanted the aforesaid estrays restored to him by the said Roger, to whom he was ready to give security, bail, and pledges for his appearance in a court of justice. And the said Roger affirmed that he took the said estrays, not in the name of the said Henry, but in the name of the abbot of Forde, whose tenant the said Henry was. And the aforesaid abbot wished to release

[1] Unjustly, *i.e.*, without lawful authority.

the aforesaid estrays, under writ of J. Wigod, sheriff, and took the writ to the bailiff of the hundred of Harrigg, that he might release the aforesaid estrays. But the said Roger would not release the aforesaid estrays under the writ of the Sheriff, and hindered the bailiff of the lord the king, who could not do his duty to the lord the king, according to law. And so the aforesaid abbot procured a writ from the lord the king for the release of the aforesaid estrays. However, the said Roger still refused to release them at the command of the lord the king, and still detained them, and held the order of the king in utter contempt (*de toto contempsit*). And the aforesaid abbot procured another writ from the lord the king, for the release of the aforesaid estrays. And J. Wygod, the sheriff, gave command to his own bailiff to release the estrays aforesaid, under the writ of the lord the king. And the aforesaid Roger still prevented the bailiff, who was unable to do his duty, and still detained the aforesaid estrays, contrary to the comand of the lord the king, and of the sheriff of Devon, and of his bailiff; until the aforesaid abbot procured a third writ for the release of the aforesaid estrays. And all this did the aforesaid Roger did unjustly,[1] and without judgment of court. And before he would consent to release the aforesaid estrays, he had from the said abbot one palfrey, of the value of five marks, and forty shillings sterling." [2]

As the lord of the manor appointed the steward and the bailiff to represent him, so the villein tenants chose from among themselves the best husbandman as their reeve or foreman to represent them. The duty of the reeve was to arrange the distribution of services due from the tenants, and to assist the bailiff in the management of the manor, which thus became the joint business of the lord on the one hand, and of the villeins on the other.

The Reeve

In addition to these principal officers the manor had also certain minor officials. To one of these, the carpenter, the service was assigned of working the timber and making the frame of the estate plough. In doing this he rendered service for his holding. Another, the smith, was bound

Minor Officials

[1] Unjustly, *i.e.*, without lawful authority.
[2] *Rot. Hun.*, Edw. I., p. 71.

to forge and fit the iron work, which was by far the most expensive part of the plough, to sharpen the scythes, to shoe a palfrey or riding-horse, and an aver, or draught-horse, for the lord. When one of these horses died the smith had the hide to make bellows. In return for hooping with iron vessels in which cheese was made, he received yearly a lamb and a fleece, and a cheese, before S. John's day, as well as a dish of butter wherewith to grease his bellows.[1] Another very important officer of the manor was the haye-ward, or hedge-ward. It was his duty to take charge of the hayes or hedges of the manor. These fences were very different from our modern hedges. The hedge was formed of stakes—heart of oak, crab tree, blackthorn, or elder—driven into the ground two feet and a half apart from each other, and woven together hurdle-fashion by "eddering" of withy, ash, maple, hazel, or white thorn. As soon as the seed was sown these hayes were set up around the field. When crops had been gathered in, the hayes were partly or wholly removed, so as to allow the cattle to wander over the stubble till the following spring. The work upon the hayes in setting them up, or taking them down, or repairing them, seldom ceased throughout the whole year. Their efficient maintenance was a matter of grave importance to the whole community. In return for his superintendence of the hayes, the haye-ward received an allotment of strips in the arable field. And in order to stimulate his zeal, the strips that were allotted to him were those that lay beside the pastures where the oxen were feeding.

With the changed conditions of land-tenure, manor officers such as these have long ceased to exist. But I find an instance of an appointment to a minor local post so late as the middle of the last century.

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[1] *The Manor*, 73.

King Edward VII., when Prince of Wales, and Baron of Bran-es, was graciously pleased, by royal letters patent, under the privy seal, bearing date the 1st December, 1842, "to appoint and depute George Pearse, of Bradninch, in the County of Devon, Esq., to be His Royal Highness' Gamekeeper for, and within the Manor of Bradninch, parcel of the Duchy of Cornwall, in the County of Devon."

The Court of the Manor

The manor had its court. In the thirteenth century, when the manorial system is most fully revealed to us, the jurisdiction of the manor court was undivided for the transaction of criminal, civil, and purely manorial business. Its president was the deputy steward. The bailiff was the lord's representative and the public prosecutor. And the tenants of the manor, both free and unfree, attended at the court and gave judgment in the cases brought before them.[1]

On the appointed day the deputy-steward took his seat as president, accompanied by his clerk to make the enrolments. A jury was formed of freemen and the better class of customary tenants. The president charged them. The deaths of tenants were presented. Estates were surrendered, and regranted by copy of the roll. The "View of Frank-pledge,"[2] or criminal business,

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[1] "The president of the court settled the procedure of the court, carried it out, and gave the final sentence, but over the law of the court he had no power. All that is comprised in the word 'judgment' was settled by the body of tenants present at the courts. This attendance was, indeed, compulsory, and absence subjected to a fine any tenant owing and refusing the service known as 'suit of court.'"—*Encycl. Brit.*, Vol. xxx., p. 527.

[2] "It was a principle of old English law to make the community collectively responsible for the suppression of local crime. All franks, or freemen, from the age of twelve, were mutually pledged as sureties for the good behaviour of each other. The supervision of this mutual suretiship of freemen belonged to this court. Hence the name View of Frank-pledge. It was a remunerative piece of petty criminal jurisdiction."—STUBBS, *Const. Hist.*, pp. 87-8.

followed. Offenders were brought in by the bailiff. If found guilty they were declared to be "in the mercy of the lord," or in shorter form, "in mercy." Then fines were assessed, not however, by the president, but by special officers, called afferers, who were elected by the court for that purpose."[1]

The following translation of extracts from the roll of the court, made by Mr. W. K. Boyd, exhibits the proceedings of the court more fully:—

BRADENYNCH [2 Jan. 1460/1] Legal Court of the Manor held there on Saturday next after the feast of St. Denis in the first year of the reign of King Edward the fourth.[2]

Mercy 3d. The homage come and present the default of Henry, Earl of Devon (12d.) who owes suit. Therefore he is in mercy.

Item;—they present that John Seler, who held of the lord one tenement and one corn-mill according to the custom of the manor, surrendered them into the hands of the lord. Wherefore there fell to the lord for a heriot one horse of the worth of 10 shillings. And hereupon came Thomas Seler and took of the lord the said tenement and mill; to hold to himself according to the custom of the manor by the rents and services therefor formerly due and accustomed. And the said John shall repair the said . . . and mill &c. And he gives for a fine—13s. 4d. And he is admitted tenant. And he did fealty by the pledge of William Seler and Robert Barry.

Estray *Item;*—they present that one mare came of estray at the feast of St. Matthew the Apostle. It remains at John Lylyngton's house.

Office *Item;*—they present to the office of Reeve Roger Atter, who, being sworn, remains.

The food rent amounts to 16d., besides 2s. paid for parchment.

The twelve [jurors] for the King	Richard Wotton	Thomas Burnsford	William atte Forsse	Sworn.
	Thomas North			
	William Rigge	John atte More	John Lymyngton	
	Walter Hogh	William Wotton	Thomas Parson	
	William Hothfeld	William Vycary	Robert Frensh	

[1] *The Manor*, p. 132.
[2] *Court Rolls*, Portf. 165, No. 57, Public Record Office.

Affirmation — Which twelve come and present that all is well. And moreover they affirm all other things here above presented.

Mercy 3d. Distress — John Frost complains of Richard Gegge in a plea of debt. And he was attached by the pledge of Richard Wotton and the Reeve; whom they have not here. Therefore they are in mercy. And let them be distrained.

Distress — Let 26s. 8d. be levied of the goods and chattels of John Lord, the elder, John Lord, the younger, and Nicholas Calow, to the use of the executors of Roger Cokker, who recovered.

Distress — Let 27s. 8d. be levied of the goods and chattels of John Lord, the elder, John Lord, the younger, and Nicholas Calow, to the use of William Caneford, which he recovered.

Suit remains — Joan Scote complains of William Maior in a plea of trespass. And the suit remains till the next [Court] by the prayer of the parties. And hereupon the same day is given.

Estrays remain — As yet one colt which came of estray at the feast of St. Luke the Evangelist last, remains with Robert Burght. And one colt which came of estray at the feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary, remains with William Hethfyld —of the worth of 40d.

Estray — As yet one white ram (*aries*) coming of estray at the feast of the Nativity of the Lord last remains with the Reeve.

The pain — As yet William Wotton has a day to repair his houses before the next Court, under pain of 20s., as appears in the court roll of the year preceding.

Sum of the court	6d.
Item; of food rent	16d.
Item; of heriot	10s.
Item; of a fine of land	13s. 4d.
Sum	25s. 2d.

[23 Oct. 1461] — Court of the Manor held there on Thursday next before the feast of the Apostles Simon and Jude, in first year of the reign of King Edward the fourth.

. . . complains of William Vicary ("by licence" *written over*) in a plea of debt &c.

. . . And they present by William Rygge. And they present the default of William Seller. And that William Vicary felled . . . and an ash tree on his tenement, to the grave damage of the Lord the King. Therefore he is in mercy. And that the highway at Brademore and Redehill is muddy and deep to the harm of the country, which . . .

Keseby and Nicholas Rede are bound to repair. Therefore they are in mercy. And let them be distrained.

And they present that John atte More permitted his houses to be ruinous &c. Therefore let him be distrained.

As yet—one black mare which came of estray at the feast of St. Matthew the Apostle, remaining at the house of John Lylyngton.

BRADENYNCH.

[12 Nov. 1461] Court of the Manor held there on Thursday next before the feast of S. Clement the Pope in the first year of the reign of King Edward the fourth.

Mercy 3d. William Vycary in mercy for licence to agree with Thomas Norys in a plea of debt.

Mercy 2d. John Keseby in mercy, because he has not yet repaired the highway at Brademore and Redehall.

BRADENYNCH.

[17 Dec. 1461] Court of the Manor held there on Thursday next before the feast of St. Thomas the Apostle, in the first year of the reign of King Edward the fourth.

[The homage] come and present the default of Simon Sarnak, who owes suit. Therefore he is in mercy.

William Rigge complains of William Beare (they are agreed) in a plea of trespass. He is not attached. Therefore let him be attached.

The same William complains of John Dolyn in a plea of covenant broken. He is not summoned. Therefore let him be summoned.

William Beare complains of William Rigge in a plea of trespass. He is not attached. Therefore let him be attached.

BRADENYNCH.

Court of the Manor held there on Thursday next after the feast of St. Hillary the Bishop, in the first year of the reign of King Edward the fourth.

Joan Scote in mercy because she did not prosecute against William Maior in a plea of trespass.

Thomas Bolehede complains of William Rigge in a plea of debt. He is not summoned. Therefore let him be summoned. [*Interlined over this entry.*—The law, that he does

not owe him 10d. for two false measures bought of him, by the pledge of John atte More—with his fourth hand.][1]

BRADENYNCH.

[12 Feb. 1461/2] Court of the Manor held there on Thursday next before the feast of St. Valentine the Martyr in the first year of the reign of King Edward the fourth.

Mercy 3d. The homage come and present the default of Thomas Seler, who owes suit. Therefore he is in mercy.

Mercy 2d. William Rigge in mercy for trespass done to William Beare by depasturing his pasture at Baggemore with his cattle, to his harm. And let him be distrained.

The Reeve in mercy because he did not attach William Vycary to answer to the lord in a plea of trespass, the reason whereof appears in the Court preceding.

BRADENYNCH.

[10 March 1461/2] Court of the Manor held there on Thursday next before the feast of St. Gregory the Pope in the second year of the reign of King Edward the fourth.

Mercy 2d. William Beare in mercy for trespass done on William Rygge by breaking his ditch at Baggemoreden, to his harm. And let him be distrained.

Fine—nothing, because in mercy 2d. To this Court comes William Vycary and gives to the lord for a fine for a certain trespass done, as appears at the head, the cause whereof appears in the five Courts preceding—by the pledge of John More and Robert Kene.

Mercy 2d. Thomas Bolehede in mercy because he withdrew himself against William Rygge in a plea of debt, for which there was the law.

Alice Barry complains of William Wotton in a plea of debt. He is not summoned. Therefore let him be summoned.

The Lord's Mill

The lord's mill was a very important institution of the manor. The first mills appear to have been domestic handmills. Then the lord made a mill to be turned by water-power, in which he ground the corn grown on his own demesne. Next he granted to the tenants on the manor the privilege of having their corn also ground at his mill. Of all

[1] *I.e.* John atte Moore and three other householders.

the tenants' corn thus ground the miller retained a certain percentage by way of payment for the grinding.[1] This method was found to be such a source of profit that the handmills were suppressed, and the tenants were required to have all their grinding done at the lord's mill. Capra had his mill on his own demesne at Kensham. As the manor developed, one mill was found to be insufficient. In Mawle's Survey made in 1586 we find the following entry:—

> "Peter Sainthill Gent and Marye his sister and Richard Sainthill holde by copie of the graunte . . . bearing date . . . ii Mylles under one Ruffe called Kaynsham Mylles[2] with . . . acres of lande Meade and Pasture pcell of the Barton Lande, and payeth xvij^{s}. vi^{d}."[3]

Also:—

> John Chuthie holdeth one tenmt and one gryst-mill with the appurten cont. xxx acres by coppie bearinge date the **ffyne ix1.** xvij daye of Februarie in the ivth yeare of Kinge Edwarde the vith (1553) after the demise of Anthonie Harvie Esquire and payeth yearlie xviij^{s}.

This latter mill, which was at Northdown,[4] was evidently found unequal to the work to be done in that part of the

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[1] "Sir Steward, the bailiff Robert complaineth of William Lang that he came on such a day to the lord's mill . . . to grind corn, to wit, a quarter of wheat, and a quarter of rye. The miller came and debonairly received his corn, and well and skillfully ground the same and put the corn in sacks, when this William bethought himself of an evil trick and felonious device, for he privily collected the sacks and put them on horses' backs and made off without giving multure and toll as he ought to have done according to the custom, to the great prejudice of the lord and damage of half a mark. He is adjudged to be at law six-handed at the next court" (*i.e.* with five compurgators to testify on oath that he was innocent of the charge, he himself being the sixth).—*The Manor*, pp. 135-6.

[2] This is upper Kensham.

[3] MAWLE, 28 Eliz.

[4] This mill was burnt down some years before 1788, but the premises were rebuilt as a leather mill, standing on two roods and fourteen perches.

manor. For the court roll shews that seven years later there were two mills there:—

[TRANSLATION.]

"At the court of the manor held at the same place on the 18th day of January in the 35th year of the Lady Elizabeth (1593), by the grace of God of England France and Ireland Queen, Defender of the Faith etc.

CAME John Warren Sen. and William Warren, son of John Warren, and received—from the Lady the Queen at the hands of John Hooker gentleman, deputy of Walter Ralegh knight . . . chief steward of the manor aforesaid, by mandate of the said Walter,—Reversion of one holding called Nether Stouthayes[1] with its appurtenances, and of two cornmills with their appurtenances, lately in the tenure of John Cathay, and John Cathaye son of John Cathaye aforesaid, for the term of their life subject to the customs of the manor aforesaid TO HAVE and TO HOLD the Reversion aforesaid, Also the aforesaid holding of the two cornmills aforesaid, and the other premisses with their appurtenances, to the aforesaid John Warren for the term of the life of whichever of them shall live the longer time according to the custom of the manor aforesaid . . . and they give to the Lady the Queen for a fine nine pounds to be paid at the end of twenty . . . in equal portions. . . .

"Given by copy of court-roll of the said manor under the seal of the said Walter Ralegh knight on the day and in the year aforesaid."

I find in the *Papers relating to Devonshire* the following entry[2]:—

"Item. The Milne of Bradnynche by the commandement of the Bysshopp of Chestr, and the oversighte of . . . John Moore Roger Holand and Thoms Wildecotts is ffynesshed and substacially repayred, and the ffyne thereof payed which amonteth to the some of—vj^{li}. xiij^{s}. iiij^{d}. and the yerly rent encressed as appereth in the Auditor's records. And Item that the Tenement that the miller dwelleth in was sett heretofore for the ffyne of xiij^{s}. iiij^{d}. and now by the seid Bysshop encresed—xl^{s}. payable this yere."

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[1] The mills at Nether Stouthayes with the land attached to them were held from the Duchy in 1788 by Henry Moore, who at that time was paying a rent of £8 for the land and £10 for the mills. At the same date the annual value is given as £34. In 1802 it had risen to £54, of which £34 is set down to "land only."

[2] MS. 24772, Vol. III., p. 203.

The reader naturally wants to know how it came to pass that the bishop of Chester should raise the rent of the mill and of the miller's house at Kensham. The information is supplied in very few words:—"John Bysshopp of Chestr was Chaunceler unto the Prince,"[1] and, no doubt, steward of the manor of Bradninch.

Simpson, in his Survey of 1788, reports that the manor grist mill did "a great deal of business." He adds, however, that of late years the business had been much hurt by the unlawful action of the Bradninch 'malters.' The miller, he tells us, charged for malt 2d. a bushel, which was the customary price. Some people in Bradninch evidently deemed the charge to be too high. And at an early date the illegal use of handmills had come into vogue. To put a stop to this, legal action had been taken long before Simpson's visit. He says:—

> "There was a suit in the Exchequer brought many years ago against the inhabitants of Bradninch for withdrawing their suit from the Prince's mills, and a Decree was obtained, which declared, in the most express terms that the Inhabitants Residents etc. in the manor of Bradninch, should not grind any corn, malt, etc. but at the Prince's mills."

The "malters and ale-house keepers," he tells us, insisted on it that the miller must "fetch the malt and carry it home again." At the handmills it was ground for 1d. a bushel. This decision of the court appears to have brought the grist back again to the prince's mills for a time. "But," continues Simpson, "not many years ago this refractory people again withdrew their suit." In consequence of this the authorities took legal action once more. "But as the defendants were numerous, and the millers were not sufficiently supported by

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[1] *Mus. Brit. Jure Empt.* 24,772. *Papers relating to Devonshire*, Vol. III. "Office Copy Original preserved in the Augmentation Office, Westr."; date in margin "*circa* 1669."

Mr. Sainthill, the cause was never tried." Simpson was fully assured that the law was on the side of the lord of the manor. He closes this part of his report in these words:—"The loss to the miller owing to this clandestine business of private handmills is computed to be about £14 or £15 a year. It is therefore humbly submitted to the Surveyor General to consider of some mode of redress if it can be obtained, and recovering this lost estate to His Royal Highness without a law suit."

Temporary Grants of the Manor

Under the charter creating the duchy of Cornwall the king's eldest son at his birth became possessed of the manor of Bradninch. When the king had no son, the manor lapsed to the crown for the time being. On such occasions it was customary for the king to grant it to whomsoever he would. Thus, on the 7th of February, 1314, he granted it to Richard Lovel. The king was using the manor of Old Rokesburgh which "was of the inheritance of Muriel, Lovel's wife, for the stocking of the castle of Rokesburgh," and the grant of Bradninch to Lovel was made "in part recompense of its value." The manor of Bradninch was surrendered by him and his wife into the king's hands 28th May, 1317, in exchange for the manors of Brehulle and Silveston.[1] The king could grant it only for the term of his own interest in it, which ceased on the birth of his son. Philip de Courtenay and Anne his wife, to whom a grant of it had been made "for life," refused to surrender it to Henry, duke of Cornwall. The matter came before the court of chancery, and judgment was given against them on the 21st December, 1404.[2]

The following table shows the value of the manor at different dates:—

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[1] *Pat. Rolls*, 10 Edw. II., pt. 2, m. 8.
[2] *Pat. Rot.*, 6 Hen. IV., pt. 1, m. 17.

Date	Authority	Value £	s.	d.
1066	Domesday Survey	5	0	0
1086	Domesday Survey	14	0	0
1275	Chapter House, *Rot. Hun.*, No. 7	30	0	0[1]
1304	Devon, *Pat. Rot.*, 32 Edw. I., m. 13	37	3	11
1316	*Rot. Pat.*, 10 Edw. II., pt. 1, m. 2	38	13	2½
1319	*Rot. Pat.*, 13 Edw. II., m. 38	57	9	11[2]
1377	*Pat. Rot.*, 1 Rich. II., pt. 5, m. 12	40	0	0[3]
1422	*Rot. Par.*, 1 Hen. VI.	100	12	0[1]
1650	Parliamentary Survey	1,817	6	0
n.d.	Last Renewal before 1788, Simpson's Survey	1,704	18	6
1788	Simpson's Survey	2,364	2	6

I bring this chapter to an end with the following lists, which give the names of the householders with the sums assessed against them in 1329, 1332, 1524, and 1540:—

MANOR

Taxpayers in 1329 & in 1332,3 & in 1524, & in 1540,1

Exchequer, Lay Subsidies, Devon, Box 95, no. 6.

Devoñ xx^{d}.

[24 May 1329] Hos rotulos liƀarunt ad sc^{a}cm hic Iacobus de Cokyntoñ ꝯto Matħas de Crauthorñ Tax̃ ꝯto Colł vicesime Regi E. ꝑcio a cōquestu anno regni sui p^{i}mo conc̃ in com̃ Devoñ xxiiij die Maii anno ꝑcio dc̃i Reg̃ E. ꝑcii.

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[1] Including the borough.

[2] This includes the advowson of the church.

[3] William Corby could not get £10 a year out of the manor because its revenues were already swallowed up by a grant of £40 to John de Sully.

Burgus de Bradench̄ cũ Man̄io.

Henr Knoustone	xij d.	Petr Rewis	vj d.
Henr Sutor	vj d.	Galfr le venour	vj d.
Rogus de Houndehull	viij d.	Willus Norman	ix d.
Regin Aleyn	vj d.	Eustachs Saundr	vj d.
Phus de Houndehull	x d.	Rics Doun	x d.
Thoms Pictor	vj d.	Waltus Gater	vj d.
Ricus de Brounston	xvj d.	Willus atte Yete	xij d.
Johs Sewy	xviij d.	Regin de Tanne	x d.
Robtus Wymarks	ix d.	Willus Calixstyn	vj d.
Is Midnyght	vj d.	Robtus Snoubloch	vj d.
Willus de Hole	vj d.	Paganus Russel	viij d.
Gregor de Metton	xij d.	Walts Snoublouch	vj d.
Rogus Fraunceys	viij d.	Ricus de Westbear	vj d.
Adam Tiroun	x d.	Willus de Colbroks	xvj d.
Willus atte Comb	xiiij d.	Nichus Bythewynd	vj d.
Robtus Coute	xij d.	Johnes de Kiresburg	xviij d.
Phus Northe	vij d.	Willus Yem	vj d.
Robtus Shurrene	vj d.	Robtus Soneman	xij d.
Waltus Boghahull	xviiij d.	Rogus Bythewynd	xviij d.
Willus atte Chapel	vj d.	Henr de Totebrugg	ij s.
Illar Cran	vj d.	Phus Floite	xij d.
Phus Stoke	vj d.	Ricus Lond	xv d.
Henr de Gengelond[1]	xij d.	Samps atte Chapele	xviij d.
Margia atte Combe	xij d.	Ricus Wyse	vj d.
Willus Soneman	xij d.	Leticia de Burneford	x d.
Adam Nel	vj d.	Willus Reed	vj d.
Lucas Baker	vij d.	Johnes Roberts	viij d.
Willus Wyse	xiiij d.		

Tax
Willus Dymmoks . . . . . ix d.
Johs Snoulblanch . . . . . ix d.
Regin Gaysh . . . . . xviij d.
Robtus de Couslade . . . . . xviij d.

Sm . . . . xlix s. ix d. p b^r.

Exchequer, Lay Subsidies, Devon, Box 95, no. 7.

Devoñ

[6 Edw. III., 1332-3] Rotulus taxat̃ decime ꝯto qntedicime in Com̃ Devoñ a lacꝭ Regi concess̃ anno vj^to ꝑ Iacobū de Cokyngtoñ ꝯto Mathm de Crouthorñ.

[1] This name still survives in the modern Gingerland.

Burgus de Bradenēch̄.

De Henr de Knoustone	xv d.	De Petro Rewys.	xij d.
De Robto de Mortone	xij d.	De Galfro le Venour	x d.
De Henr le Sutter	x d.	De Wills Norman	x d.
De Rogo de Houndehille	x d.	De Regin Aleyn	x d.
De Eustachs Saundre.	viij d.	De Pho de Houndehille	x d.
De Rico Don	xviij d.	De Thoma le Peyngtour	x d.
De Walto Gater	viij d.	De Rico Brounston	ij s.
De Wills atte Yete	ij s.	De Johne Sewy	ij s.
De Regin le Tanne	xij d.	De Robts Wymarks	xij d.
De Wills Calsteyn	x d.	De Robts Snoublorch	xij d.
De Johne White	viij d.	De Rogo de Mettone.	viij d.
De Rogo Fraunceys	xij d.	De Rico de Westbeare	iij s.
De Adam Coroun	viij d.	De Wills Colbroks	iij s.
De Wills atte Combe	xxiij d.	De Nichs Bythewynde	x d.
De Robto Coute.	viij d.	De Johne de Kersburg	xv d.
De Wills le Yem	viij d.	De Pho le Northerne.	x d.
De Robto Shurrene	xij d	De Wills Boghehull	x d.
De Robto Soneman	xv d.	De Wills Soneman	xiij d.
De Wills atte Chapele	x d.	De Robto Couslade	ij s.
De Hillar Cran	x d.	De Reginaldo Gasse	ij s.
De Johe Floiter	ij s.	De Pho de Stoke	xv d.
De Gregorio Lond	ij s.	De Henr de Gaggelond[1]	xx d.
De Sampsone at Chapele	ij s.	De Rads atte Combe	xx d.
De Rico le Wyse	ij s.	De Rico Bythewate	xx d.
De Leticia de Burneford	xx d.	De Adam Neel	xij d.
De Wills Reed	viij d.	De Wills de Goggelond[1]	viij d.
De Rico Baggemor	viij d.	De Wills Deylond	viij d.
De Johne Reed	viij d.		

Taxator Willus Dymmoks . . . . . xij d.
Johnes Snoublonch . . . . . xij d.
Henr de Tottebrugg . . . . . xviij d.

Sm^{a}—lxx s. vj d.

p b.

Exchequer, Lay Subsidies, Devon, Box 96, no. 150.

Devon

[28 April 1524] [Assessment of the first payment of the subsidy granted in the 16th year of the reign of King Henry VIII. on the inhabitants within the Hundreds of Braunton, Hayridge, Tyverton, and Halberton.

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[1] *I.e.*, Gingerland.

The indenture of taxation is dated 28th April, 16 Henry VIII.]

Hundr̃m de Harrygꝭ. Pochia de Bradnynch̃.

Johes Francs	vj s. viij d.	Rogus Coll	xij d.
Johes pson	xxiiij s.	Johes Mortymer	iij s. vj d.
Johes Mayne	xxij d.	Johes S . , .	vj s. viij d.
Ricus Way	xij d.	(Decayed)	
Wills Coloprest	ij s.	* * *	
Johes Kene	iiij s. vj d.	Will	iiij d.
Wills Wele	ij s. vj d.	Simon	xij d.
Johes Whyryrght	xij d.	Rogus Lake	v s.
Robtus Hill	iiij s.	Hugo Jauslyn	iiij d.
Robtus Chathay jun	xij d.	Wills . . . lon	iiij d.
Wills Sayer	ij s. vj d.	Wills Hill in bonis	iiij d.
Johes Sayer	xij d.	Phus Hyll in bonis	xij d.
Elizabeth Forsse	v s. vj d.	Johes Baker	iiij d.
Rogus More	xij d.	Danus Glas	iiij d.
Johes Ophom	xviij d.	Robtus Janslyn	xij d.
Johes Kyll jun	xij d.	Thomas Bolyn	iiij d.
Rogus Barry	ij s. vj d.	Johes Lord	v s.
Wills Hill	ij s.	Robtus Myller	xij d.
Matheus Rokeleffe	vj d.	Johes Hall	iiij d.
Thomas Bryndesmede	xviij d.	Johes Roke	xviij d.
Johes Chatay senn	xij d.	Georgius Fosse	xviij d.
Johes Taylor	ij s. vj d.	Johes Rowe	iiij d.
Thomas Warryn	ij s.	Johes North	iiij d.
Johes Toker	ij s. vj d.	Ricus Bakar	xij d.
Ricus Crosse	ij s.	Johes Chathay	xviij d.
Robtus Taylor	vj s. iiij d.	Thomas Holwyll	iiij d.
Ricus Seward	xviij d.	Johes Miller	xij d.
Johes Lynyngton	vj s. viij d.	Ricus Byrd	xij d.
Robtus More	ij s. vj d.	Thomas Mogryg	iiij d.
Johes Colthard	viij d.	Ricus Penston	iiij d.
Rogus Holwyll	xij d.	Waltus Rede	xij d.
Johes Gybbe	iij s.	Thomas Barnard	iiij d.
Thomas Dunseford	viij d.	Emyn Chathay	xij d.
Nichus Hokley	vj s. vj d.	Elizabeth Baker	xij d.
Johes . . .	xij d.	Clemens Carnyk	xij d.
Johes Hoper	ij s. vi d.	Johes Knodon	iiij d.
Wills Lord jun	xij d.	Johes Baker	iiij d.
Johes Edward	v s.	Johes Hall	ij s.
Johes Glode	vj d.	Ricus Tweg	xviij d.
Ricus Mortymer	iij s.	Rogus Dunseford	xij d.
Johes Butt	v s. vj d.	Johes Hyll	xij d.

Wills Chathay	xij d.	Ricus Baunton	iiij d.
Thomas More	iij s. vj d.	Henr Holwyll	iiij d.
Robtus Chathay	xviij d.	Johes Puggodon	xij d.
Thomas Chathay	iiij d.	Johes Warryn	vj s. viij d.
Thomas Hakworthy	iiij d.	Johes Mawdyte	iiij s. vj d.
Johes More	vj d.	Ricus Chanon	v s.
Wills Rede	iiij d.	Thomas Tore	ij s. vj d.
Humfrus Erle	v s.	Wills Tayllour	v s.
Johes Twege	ij s.	Johes Farraunt	xij d.
Wills Twege	xl d.	Emotea Thowslade	xij d.

Sm[a] total—xj li. xvij s. iij d.

Exchequer, Lay Subsidies, Devon, Box 97, no. 220.

[1540-1] Assessment on the inhabitants within the Hundreds of Westbudleigh, Bampton, Tyverton, and Hayridge, to the second payment of the subsidy granted in the 32nd year of King Henry viii.

Devoñ

Pochia de Bradnynch̃.

D Johne Hall p bonis	x s.	D Willms Wyke p bonis	x s.
D Johne Waren p bonis	xvj s. viij d.	D Thoma pson p bonis	x s.
D Johne Mawdyte p bonis	x s. vj d.	D Johne Seller p bonis	x s.
D Rico Chanon p bonis	xij s.	D Thoma Turri p bonis	x s.
D Agneta Taylor vid p bonis	x s.	D Johna Gybbe p bonis	x s.
D Rico Cose p bonis	x s.	D Johne Forst p bonis	x s.
		D Nicho Eveley p bonis	x s.
		D Rico Opkyns p bonis	x s.
		D Johne Heyron p bonis	x s.

Sm[a]—vii li. xix. s. ij d.

CHAPTER IV

THE BOROUGH AND LIBERTIES

IT is not easy, perhaps it is not possible, to draw a very distinct line dividing at all points the township from the manor of Bradninch in early times. Bishop STUBBS says: "These early townships which were founded on the land of a lord are in many respects much the same as manors. The lord exercised in both the functions depending on the free possession of the land."[1] The manor, as we have seen,[2] took in the greatest part of the parish. The area of the borough was limited to a small tract of land.

The Town or Borough

This constituted "the Towne or Borough wch the Lorde himselffe dyd first lymet, and sett out and apoynted the boundes thereof."[3] If we may trust the official map of the manor in possession of the Duchy of Cornwall, it would seem that at some unknown date the area of the borough was extended so as to take in what has since been known as 'Western Town.'[4] The area

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[1] *Const. Hist.*, p. 89.

[2] See above, p. 62.

[3] *Harl. MS.* 5827, p. 136[1].

[4] Bradninch people appear for the most part to have been under a mistake as to the bounds of the borough. It was commonly supposed that the borough and the parish were conterminous. The district over which the mayor's jurisdiction extended was styled in the Quarter Sessions books "the Borough and Liberty of Bradninch," as if Colebrook, the portion of it which lay outside the parish, were the only "Liberty." Whereas the fact really was that

Borough of Bradninch

From a Survey of the Honor of Bradninch by Wm. Simpson, 1788

The dark line marks the boundary of the borough

of this extended borough was about one hundred and thirty acres statute measure.[1]

In Norman times the people who occupied the dwellings collected together on this small area were chiefly tillers of the soil. In the midst of them there grew up of necessity a trading community; and as the security of life increased, and the common fields were broken up into farms, the town was left to the artisan and the merchant. Beyond this we know practically nothing of the changes that may have taken place in the borough between the coming of the Saxons and the middle of the seventeenth century.

The Great Fire

The first fact which looms out of the silent past is the destruction of the town whose growth we would chronicle. The year 1666 was fateful for Bradninch as well as for London. It too then had its 'Great Fire,' which swept all before it within the borough, leaving the church the only building standing. So general was the ruin that Izacke spoke of the town as being "almost consumed," and so great the distress occasioned by it that, as he tells us, "by a voluntary contribution of the inhabitants made in Exeter, two hundred pounds in money and necessaries were sent" to the sufferers.[2] Letters patent—commonly called a

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the borough was a very small area of irregular shape, extending no further along the different roads leading from the town than Pendennis on the road to Waterstave, the top of Cullompton Hill on the road to Cullompton, Sherehaies on the road to Trinity, the lower gate of the allotment field on the left and the top of the field above Ambrose Lane on the right on the road to Beacon, the pound at Bythawin on the road to Silverton, Charwell on the left and Colchard's on the right on the road to Hele, and Pinfold on the road to Kensham. And all the rest of the manor of Bradninch, the manor of Hele Payn, Garlandshayes, and all the smaller portions of freehold in the parish, were within the 'Liberties' of the borough aforesaid.

[1] The borough acre was only three-quarters of the statute acre.

[2] *Remarkable Antiquities of the City of Exeter, originally collected* by RICHARD IZACKE, Esq., heretofore Chamberlain therein. See Ed., 1723, p. 172.

'brief'—for a public collection in churches were issued, and contributions were sent from far and near to relieve the distress of the homeless folk. The town trust possesses a record, which I print, of the damage done by this disastrous, though possibly beneficent, fire.

The number of habitations, and the value set upon each, shews that the whole town was very modest both in dimension and in character:—

"A List of the houses Burnt in Bradninch May ye 17th *Anno Dni* 1666. And what each man's pticular loss was of his house valued att p: [*writing illegible*]

	£	s.
The Church house	100	00
The house by the gate	069	
Mr Gibbs house	013	
Henry Smiths house	090	
Will. Williams house	020	
John Mills Tenemt:	110	
Caleb Saunder's home tenem	118	
Bernard Mayes 3 tenemts	240	
Hen. Miller senr. Barne & linney	050	
David Hayes	061	
Nicholas Martyn	090	
John Potums tenemt:	005	
John Tibbs house	005	
John Wall	018	
Mary Wall	012	
Caleb Saunders 4 tenemts: behind street	062	
Walter Dunsford	050	
Henry Hodman	120	
Will Carpenter	010	
John Saunders	012	
Roger Hill	042	
Mr Tanners Margt: Mayne had	080	
John Wills Rich Squire had	064	
Robt Taylors 2 tenemts:	136	
Mr Underwood	080	
Mr Venner	280	
Mr Jermans wester tenemt:	080	
John Gibbs Tenemts:	075	
Mr Tanners Linnaton had	015	
John Hawkes	065	
Amount	2172	00

	£	s.
Amount forward	2172	00
John Rowe	057	
Willmott Taylor wid	086	
Willmott Miller vid	040	
John Turner	310	12
Thomas Pearce	064	
Mr Jermans higher Tenemt:	100	
Caleb Saunders Bake house	60	
Rich Rose	55	
Hen Miller Sen ij in ye Milway	30	
Margt Saunders	40	
John Ackland	32	
Will Richards	180	
Mr James Osmond [*paper worn*]	[043]	
Thomas Slader	59	
George Hill	10	
Humfrey Dunsford	57	
Bernard May behindstreet	109	
Thomas Taylor	16	
Phillip Berrey	23	
Samuell Beadon	50	
Edmonnd Hitt	20	
John Challis tenemt	30	
John Pearces Tenemt	35	
Henry Slade	115	
Henry Lake	08	
Ambrose Snow	45	
Mr John Taylors Shambles	45	
Mr Thom Pearce	190	
Robt Channon	16	
Nicholas Beadon	60	
Mary Miller sen	130	
The Guildhall	60	
John Torre	110	
Peter Bears viewed July 9th	65	
The whole Summe is	4522	12

After the Fire

After the fire of 1666 the lower part of New Haven was not rebuilt. The opening to the combe which it had occupied was closed by the erection of the houses known to us as the old Spread Eagle, Challice House, and Comfort Cottage; and thenceforth the only access to the upper parts of

The fine line represents the town as it is to-day. The dark broken line shews what it was, according to an old map, made after 1656, and before 1680, which is in possession of the Duchy of Cornwall.

A. Guildhall.
B. Green Dragon.
C. Brewery.
D. Cesspit.
E. Sawpit.
F. School.
G. Dwelling-houses.
H. Waste Land.
J. Street for which New Street was substituted.

Plan of the Town

New Haven lay through the churchyard, and from the Beacon Road. The main thoroughfare of the town, now known as Fore Street, broadened out gradually as it climbed the hill. But the wider portion of it was not all open street. Above Church Lane it was divided into Fore Street to the west and Back Street to the east by an island of houses called Middle Row. This island, beginning with 'the shambles' on the north and ending with 'the guildhall' on the south, was broken into three blocks by Little Lane and Big Lane. Fore Street was the coach road. Back Street was a mere cobbled footway. The ground between the two streets sloped up so steeply that the houses, which had two stories facing Fore Street, had only one at the back.

The broad space at the top of the hill was filled by one continuous building comprising the guildhall and the Green Dragon, and a row of inhabited houses which were separated from the Green Dragon by a "drangway about as wide as a door." To the north of the guildhall was a yard, in which stood a brewery and cess-pit.

Another fire[1] in the winter of 1683-4 was of sufficient magnitude to call forth another 'brief.' It had the effect of making considerable alterations in the plan of a part of the town. Starting from the sixth house above Church Lane, and moving in a south-westerly direction, it made a complete clearance of both sides of the old street which led from Beacon to Big Lane. In the rebuilding this street was straightened, and became the present New Street. And at the same time the new houses encroached somewhat upon Fore Street.

Fire of 1832

On the 18th July, 1832, at 11 a.m., a fire was discovered over the bakehouse belonging to Richard Haydon, constable and baker. The bakehouse stood just opposite to New Street, at

[1] In Mr. H. Nicks' house, where the fire began, is an oak carving of a rose between the letters C and R. This was clearly made in the reign of Charles II., which came to an end in 1685.

the corner between Back Street and Big Lane. The bakers used to light their fires with dry furze known as 'nickies.' Haydon kept his 'nickies' in the space between the oven and the roof, and, the weather having been unusually hot, they were as dry as a tinder. They blazed up, as one said, "like the crackling of thorns under a pot." A fresh wind from the north-west flung the burning sparks broadcast on to the thatched roofs. Before the danger was realized, the fire had leaped across the narrow width of old Back Street, and seizing the thatch of the houses to the east of it, began to extend at once both up and down the hill. It made its way more slowly down the hill, as far as an old pound-house which stood beside, but was detached from, the old King William Inn. This pound-house, being tiled, did not take fire, and the progress of the flames was stayed in that direction. But they were carried by the wind with fearful speed along the two lines of roofs extending up the hill on either side to right and left. On the right the guildhall and borough prison with the Green Dragon were instantly in flames. On the left the Baptist chapel was seized, and the whole block of houses beyond, as you go up Millway, as far as the passage between the continuous row of houses known as the Folly and the one isolated house beyond. This house was saved by pouring water on the thatch. Meanwhile the flames had leaped across Millway, and beginning from the house nearest to Bowling Green, the fiery torrent raged onward down the hill, engulfing all it met, until it reached the spot where the present chemist's shop stands. It had got so far about two o'clock in the afternoon, when Robert Ellis, a thatcher, hurrying home from Coombe, and seeing that there was no hope of cutting off the fire at any higher point, at once stripped the roof from a house a little farther down the northern slope of the hill. And by this act of precautionary destruction he prevented the fire from making its way to Western Town.

All the buildings on the west side of Fore Street escaped. But the whole of Middle Row was laid in ruins as far as Podger's school, which was saved by an intervening saw-pit. A man who had lost an arm in Mr. Dewdney's mill[1] was confined in the borough gaol at the time. In the first rush and excitement he was forgotten. But Jacobs, the gaoler, remembered him just in time, and he was got out unhurt. In the house next to the chapel lay an old man, John Ingersant, bedridden. The flaming thatch had slipped from the roof to the ground and completely blocked the doorway. William Rabjohn and the octogenarian sexton, William Miller, tried to effect a rescue. They broke a way through the burning mass, and dragged the old man from his bed. But before they could reach the street he slipped from their grasp, and they themselves escaped with difficulty. Both the brave men were badly burnt. Rabjohn recovered, but old Miller died of the shock. James Forse and others were also severely injured.

This was much the greatest fire that Bradninch has known since the complete conflagration of 1666. Altogether, in addition to the guildhall and borough gaol, and the Baptist chapel, forty-eight dwelling-houses lay in ruin.

When Bradninch began to arise like a phœnix from its ashes, it assumed a new aspect. A building committee was appointed, who selected as a site for the new guildhall and prison a piece of ground belonging to the corporation. A grant of this land was taken by the churchwardens for a term of one thousand years, beginning at Lady Day, 1833, at a yearly rent of three pounds. And at the same time it was agreed by the parishioners

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[1] The same man is said to have had another very narrow escape at a later date. He lived in a cottage belonging to Mr. Tanner near the pound-house at Bythawin. Lying in bed on a Sunday till midday, he saw a crack in the wall opening. He had just time to jump up and hurry out when the roof fell in.

in vestry assembled, and by the mayor, "that the scites of the old Guildhall and Prison, and also of the premises formerly adjoining thereto, and lately destroyed by fire, called the Green Dragon Inn, shall from henceforth be considered public property, and that no building of any sort or kind are in future to be erected thereon or any part thereof."

Other Fires

One Sunday night in the dead of winter (1835-6), old Peter Warren, looking out across the street, gave the alarm that the Spread Eagle was on fire. The Spread Eagle stood out in modest dignity among the surrounding buildings, for it had been *par excellence* the hostelry of the town. It had a porch, whose roof was a flower garden, covering the footpath and reaching out to the roadway. The house was divided on the ground floor into two sections by an ample covered way leading to the stable-yard, where the relays of coach-horses in former days had found rest and food; on the right of this passage was the grand parlour, to which the passengers had repaired while the horses were changed; on the left were the rooms which provided accommodation for local customers, while upstairs was a large room for assemblies and dancing. Bradninch had been very proud of Mr. Manley's 'Grand Hotel.' All these glories perished, and the whole block of buildings as far as the church gate were also burnt out.

Encroachments

After the fire the débris was cleared away, and the area, thitherto occupied by houses, was pegged out for rebuilding. Before the building began, however, the owners of several of the plots, acting in concert, moved the pegs eastward, so as to take in a portion of the public street. Mr. George Pearse protested energetically against the encroachment. Feeling ran high, and the Mosaic imprecation upon the remover of a neighbour's landmark was much quoted. But the encroachers refused to be balked, and their new houses stand partly upon land filched from the public.

In 1855 a fire destroyed the houses at East End from Mr. Coleridge's bakery to Mrs. Norman's.

On Sunday morning, the 4th of May, 1873, a fire broke out in Tucker's bakehouse, where the present post office is. The stamping of the horses in the stable about daybreak awakened Charles Mortimore, carrier, who gave the alarm. The flames had already gained such strong mastery that the family could only escape

Tucker's House, built after the fire of 1666

through the windows. The fire ran up the hill, and also sprang across the street, and it was not extinguished till it reached the very house where the fire of 1832 was brought to a stand. In one hour fifteen houses were laid in ruins. The destruction of these houses was a distinct loss. They had rather a special character of their own, and had been built immediately after the great fire, Mortimore's house bearing the date 1666.

In September, 1884, seven or eight houses were burnt out in New Street.

On Bank Holiday, August, 1897, the King William Inn and three other houses were destroyed.

Thus the whole town eastward of the main thoroughfare, from Coleridge's bakehouse to Hele Road, has been burned down once more since the great fire, while on the other side of the road only half a dozen houses southwards from Church Lane have escaped the same fate.

Comfort Cottage, built in 1681

Old Bradninch Picturesque

Richard Symonds, who kept a *Diary of the Marches of the Royal Army during the Great Civil War*,[1] visited Bradninch in July, 1644, twenty-two years before the great fire. He touches off the place in a few words. He calls it "a Mayor towne, though all the houses be clay, without any timber in the wall except the doores, roofe, and windowes, which is the fashion of

[1] Printed by the Camden Society.

the country." The only stone building in the borough was the church. When the town was rebuilt after the fire, it had only four houses which could boast the distinction of a porch—the Spread Eagle, Comfort Cottage, Tucker's bakehouse, and another in the angle between Peter Street and the modern Back Street. But, though not imposing, it had a something about it which always impressed the stranger. The general effect of the lie of the place, and especially the three parallel rows of thatched "cottages overgrown with moss," which met his view as he descended the hill from Cullompton, are noted by travellers in 1644, 1788, and 1829.[1]

Municipal Rights

The people of this inflammable little place possessed an ancient heritage of municipal privilege. That no injustice may be done to their claims, it will be best to state them as they are set out in the report of a parliamentary commission made on the 21st of March, 1833.

Charters

The corporation claimed to be a corporation by prescription. They possessed the following charters:—

Arthur Reginald, son of Henry I.;
10 King John, 1208;[2]
2 Jac. I., 13th November, 1603.

These charters were destroyed by fire in the year 1666, when the Guildhall and the prison were burnt. An exemplification of the charter of James was granted in 1667.[3] This continued to be the governing charter of the corporation until it was dissolved.

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[1] Polwhele, Vol. iii., p. 250; Shaw's *Tour to the West*, p. 339; and Patterson's *Roads*.

[2] This should be 1209. See below, p. 118.

[3] I can only account for this date by supposing that it was given in evidence before the committee that an exemplification was procured immediately after the Charter of James I. was burned. See below, p. 119.

Style

The legal style of the corporation was "The Mayor and Burgesses of the Borough of Bradneis, otherwise Bradninch, in the County of Devon."

Bodies composing the Corporation, and Officers

The corporation consisted of a mayor, twelve masters, and an indefinite number of free burgesses. There were also the following officers: a recorder, a town clerk, two serjeants-at-mace, four constables, and a head constable.

Common Council

The mayor and masters were the governing body of the corporation.

Mayor

The mayor was elected or chosen on S. Thomas' day, from the masters, by the mayor, masters, and free burgesses, or the major part of them. He was appointed for one year, and until another person was elected and sworn in; but it had not been usual for many years for the mayor to hold over. In practice the masters filled the office in rotation. The mayor was a justice of the peace for the borough, and presided at the quarter sessions, and in the court of record. Though not required to be a resident by the charter, in practice he had always been so. He had no power to make a deputy. After his election as mayor, he still continued to be one of the body of masters. He was reeve of the borough, part of the manor of Bradninch. He received an allowance of £12 12*s*. for hospitality.

Masters

There were thirteen masters, including the mayor; and on a vacancy occurring in their body, it was filled up by the mayor, masters, and burgesses; and the same

persons were also invested with power to remove a master at any time, for ill government, or other reasonable cause. After his election as master, the party still retained the privileges of a free burgess. The masters were required to be resident at the time of their election, but not afterwards; though in practice they did usually reside. They formed the common council, and governing body of the corporation.

The following were the masters at the time of the inquiry in 1833:—

Date of Appointment	Name	Profession	Residence	Age
1785	Henry Bowden	Gentleman	Bradninch	70
1790	Rev. Thomas Tanner	Vicar of Bradninch	do.	80
1803	John Rogers Whitter	Gentleman	London	55
1806	William Drew	do.	Bradninch	68
1806	William Martyn	do.	do.	60
1806	Daniel Middleton	do.	do.	60
1812	Henry Sparks Bowden	Surgeon	do.	44
1822	George Pearse	Attorney	do.	33
1827	Anthony Martyn	Gentleman	do.	33
1829	Edward Pearse	do.	do.	31
1833	Charles Drew	do.	do.	29

Several of the masters were related to one another: the Messrs. Drew were uncle and nephew; the Messrs. Pearse were brothers; the Messrs. Bowden and the Messrs. Martyn were father and son.

Free Burgesses

The mode of appointing the free burgesses was not specified in the charter. They were elected by prescriptive right by the mayor and masters. Birth and servitude also conferred the franchise. The eldest son of a free burgess was entitled to be admitted a free burgess himself; and apprenticeship for seven years to a free burgess gave to the apprentice the same right. It was necessary, however, that the apprenticeship should be in the borough, and it was necessary to produce the

indentures before admission. A fee of 10*s.* 6*d.* was payable to the town clerk on admission. The free burgesses concurred, as already stated, in municipal elections. Their number at the time of the inquiry was thirty-three. Of those who were entitled by birth or servitude very few claimed to be admitted, on account of the expense. At the time of the inquiry the great majority of the freemen were freemen by election, some of them having been elected, though entitled to the franchise by birth, or by servitude. Before the election in August, 1832, the number of the freemen was reduced to three, no election having taken place for many years. The new burgesses were selected from the principal inhabitants of the place. Several of the burgesses then elected were related to, or connected by marriage with, the masters. The resident free burgesses claimed to be exempt from serving on county juries.

The Recorder

The recorder was chosen by the mayor and masters for the time being, or the major part of them, of whom the mayor must be one. He held his office for one whole year, and afterwards, from thence, until another person should be elected into the office. It was required that he should be "a discreet man, learned in the laws of England." A barrister or attorney had usually been appointed. The recorder was a justice of the peace, and performed the actual duties of the chairman at the quarter sessions. He did not preside as a judge, in the court of record, but in practice he sat there as the mayor's assistant, at the quarterly court. He had no power of appointing a deputy. He received a salary of £10 a year. In 1833 Mr. Richard John Marker, attorney, was recorder. He was appointed on the 4th of May, 1818.

The custom of mayor-choosing was as follows: On S. Thomas' day, 21st December, the mayor and masters

put in nomination two of their own body. The town clerk, reading out the names of the masters and burgesses from the official roll, called upon each in his turn to say which of the two nominees he chose. The recorder declared him who had the larger number of votes to be mayor for the ensuing year. Whereupon the new mayor immediately took the oaths of office and allegiance before the out-going mayor and masters.

The town clerk was appointed by the recorder, and held office for life.

The two sergeants-at-mace were appointed by the mayor and masters, and held office 'during pleasure.'

The head constable and four inferior constables were selected and appointed by the mayor-elect, and sworn at the next Epiphany quarter sessions of the peace to "execute their office for one year within the Borough, Liberty and Precincts of the Parish."

Reginald's Charter

Simpson, who spent some months in Bradninch in 1788 gathering information for his survey, seems to have had access to copies of at least some of the lost documents. And he says without any qualification of his statement that

> "Reginald granted to the inhabitants a charter to elect a Mayor and Burgesses with various Powers, Privileges, and Immunities, and settled several lands to the use of the Borough, and gave them his arms for a Seal."

The value of Simpson's testimony may seem to be impaired by the manifest incorrectness of what he says about the arms. But his statement was clearly based on the evidence of the old silver seal which was shewn to him. The seal has the imperial eagle surrounded by the words, 'Sigil-Comi-Regnaldi-de Braneis.' Reginald's arms were gu. two lions passant guardant or, a batune sinister az.; while the arms of Bradninch—or, an eagle displayed sa.—are the gift of Richard, king of the Romans, who alone of the barons of Bran-es was entitled

to bear them.[1] The device on the seal is a solecism. At the British Museum I learn that the seal carries evidence that it is of English make of the seventeenth century. It seems extremely probable that it was made after the great fire, to replace the old seal then destroyed. It must, I think, have been made by the direction of a mayor, whose knowledge was of that order which is accounted dangerous. Knowing that the town had received its first charter from Reginald, a king's son, and that its arms were the arms of a king's son, he put two and two together, and produced, in his innocence, as a seal for the borough, a combination which is at once historically and heraldically impossible.

A return was made by the mayor on the 9th April, 1823, in which it is stated:—

> "It was first incorporated by Reginald Earl of Cornwall in the Reign of King Henry I., who by his Charter gave and granted to the Burgesses of the said Borough 'that they should have of their own Choice a Portgreeve, and that the Pleas of the Town should be tryed and determined before him, and by the advice of the Burgesses there,' which Grant was afterwards ratified and confirmed by Henry the Son and Heir of the said Reginald Earl of Cornwall."

These charters were probably obtained as the early charters of other towns in England—except London—were obtained, *i.e.* they were bought "by sheer hard bargaining from men who wanted money."[2]

The charter of king John, which is dated 25th September, 1209, grants to Henry Fitz-Count—*i.e.* Henry, son of earl Reginald—and his heirs, as lords of Bradenesse, "all liberties and free customs which the city of Exeter has."[3]

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[1] Richard bore arms, as earl of Cornwall, Arg. a lion rampant gu., crowned or, on a border sa. bezantée. These arms he did not give to Bradninch.

[2] GREEN, *Short Hist.*, p. 189.

[3] *Charter Roll*, 10 John, membrane 3.

The charter of James I., which was burnt, was exemplified by a certified transcript under the great seal, 19th February, 20 Charles II. (1680). It was surrendered to king James II., who in 1685 granted a new charter. In 1788, however, the corporation took the opinion of counsel on the surrender of the charter of James I. And it was held that the surrender had been improperly extorted by the crown, by unconstitutional means, and that, not having been enrolled, it was void, and further that the charter of James II. was also void. Thereupon the corporation fell back upon the charter of James I., and continued to act upon its authority until, under the operation of the Municipalities Act, it ceased to exist at Lady Day, 1886.

Charter of James I.

From its Caroline exemplification we learn that the charter of James I., which was dated 13th of November, 2 James I. (1604)

> "granted, ratified, and confirmed unto the Mayor and Burgesses and to their Successors such, so many, the same and the like Courts of Record, Clerks of the Market, the Assize, and Assays of Bread, Wine, and Ale, Customs, Liberties, Privileges, Immunities, Acquittances, Exemptions and Jurisdictions whatsoever, which the Mayor and Burgesses of the said Borough had then, or heretofore had, held, used, or enjoyed or ought to have had, held, used, or enjoyed, to them and their Successors for ever, by hereditary estate, or by reason or pretext of any charters, or Letters Patent in any manner theretofore made, granted, or confirmed by any Progenitor, or Ancestor of his then Majesty, or any other Person, or Persons howsoever, or theretofore in any other manner used, had, or accustomed, under any Right, Custom, Usage, Prescription, or Title, although the same or any of them might not have been theretofore used, or might have been abused, or have been discontinued, and although the same, or any of them were, or had been forfeited, or lost."

From a verdict of the borough of Bradninch in the days of the king of the Romans, we learn what some of these rights were. The lord, we are told, has "gallows,

pillory and tumbrel, the assize of bread and ale, and he has the estreats of writs and the plea of withernam and warren and other royal liberties."

To take these rights one by one:—The charter of James took away from the borough the use of its gallows.

The Gallows

For, while it gave the authorities full power to deal with all lesser crimes and offences, it provided that they should not in any manner "proceed to the determining of any treason, murder, or felony, or of any matter affecting loss of life or limb."

The pillory was a mode of punishment which seems to have come down from Anglo-Saxon times. It was

The Pillory

not, however, peculiar to England. Indeed, it was long in use in most of the countries of Europe. Its old English name was 'halsfang,' which means, 'catching the neck.' It assumed many forms, and was constructed differently for the punishment of men and of women. In its simplest form it consisted of a strong wooden post and frame, firmly fixed in a platform which stood several feet above the level of the ground. Our pillory stood in front of the shambles, looking down the street. Simpson mentions its being still in existence in 1788, and Mary Danay, who was christened in 1793, used to tell her children how she had seen it in use.[1]

Tumbrel was the right of administering a wholesome

Tumbrel

punishment to common scolds and dishonest tradesmen. Tumbrel was properly the name of a low box cart for carrying dung. But it was

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[1] "The Pillory was used for the last time in England on the 24th of June, 1830, when Peter James Bossy endured the punishment for perjury. An Act of Parliament, dated 30th June, 1837, put an end to its use in the United Kingdom. After this it seems to have vanished from the face of the earth very rapidly. Yet pillories were to be seen at Coleshill in Warwickshire, and at Rye in Sussex in 1858; at East Looe in 1869; and at Marlborough in 1875."—*Notes and Queries*, Ser. III., Vol. VI., pp. 278, 300; Ser. IV. Vol. IV., p. 187; Ser. V., Vol. III., p. 226. For an account of the pillory see *The Reliquary*, Vol. I., pp. 209-24.

given to a stool or chair set on wheels, in which the offender was tied, and then ducked or plunged into water. It must have ceased to exist here at an early date, for I have found no trace of any remembrance of it. Whether it vanished because of the inconvenient distance of the Culm, or because Bradninch women kept their tongues from evil-speaking, and Bradninch men were true and just in all their dealing, I do not pretend to know.

Assize of Bread and Ale

The assize[1] of bread was the right to fix the price of bread, or, to use the contracted form of the same word now in common use among us, it was the right to determine the 'size' of the loaf 'of every sort of bread' to be sold for a fixed price. The assize of ale was the right to determine the quality and quantity of that beverage to be sold at a fixed price. By an act passed in 1266 entitled "A Statute of the Pillory and Tumbrell, and of the Assize of Bread and Ale," it was enacted that:—

> "When a quarter of Barley is sold for two shillings, then, four quarts of Ale shall be sold for a peny: when for two shillings six pence, then seven quarts of Ale shall be sold for two pence: when for three shillings, then three quarts for one peny: when for three shillings six pence, then five quarts for two pence: when it is sold for four shillings, then two quarts at one peny."

This wholesome act had penalties attached to it:—

> "If a Baker or a Brewer be convict because he hath not observed the Assise of Bread and Ale, he shall be amerced according to his offence, if it be not overgrievous; but if

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[1] Assessor is one who sits near the seat of the judge. To assess is to sit, or hold a sitting or assize, as for the purpose of imposing a rate or tax, which never is imposed unless by an assize (nisi ab *assessu*) of men appointed for the purpose. An act "for wood and coal to keep the full 'size'" is called "an acte for assize of fuel"; and it fixes the quantity of coals to a sack, and the dimensions of different sorts of fire-wood, shides, billets, faggots, etc.

> the offence be grievous and often, and will not be corrected, then he shall suffer punishment of the body, that is to wit, a Baker to the Pillory, and a Brewer to the Tumbrel, or some other correction."

Withernam, Warren, and other Royal Liberties

Withernam (wider-nahme) was the right to imprison a defendant without bail till he produced a person who had been conveyed out of the jurisdiction; and also to seize goods of equal value in reprisal for goods previously distrained and wrongfully removed. Warren was a franchise, either by prescription or royal grant, to keep in an enclosure "beasts and fowls of warren," *i.e.* animals that are by nature wild. Another 'royal liberty' which the burgesses of Bradninch enjoyed was the right to travel toll-free throughout the kingdom. This privilege survived all the rest, and was exercised to the last.

Parliamentary Representation

The parliamentary franchise was bestowed upon Bradninch at a very early date. It was not till 1265 that any borough in England was deemed worthy of being represented in parliament. And it was not till 1295 that "every city, borough, and leading town" began to send each their two burgesses to sit side by side with the knights, nobles, and barons of the Great Council.[1]

Pursuant to a writ, issued at Windsor 8 Jan., 6 Edward II. (1313-14), "Ricardus le Venour and Thomas de Tottebourne were returned, 18th March, in the same year, to represent the Borough of Bradeneysh in Parliament at Westminster." But these two gentlemen held their seats for a very short time. A new Parliament met six months later, "on Sunday next after the Feast of S. Matthew the Apostle" (23rd September). On this election Mr. Palgrave makes the following observation:—

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[1] GREEN, *Short Hist.*, p. 172.

> "Original writ for the County of Devon extant; but no return made for this Borough (*i.e.* Bradninch), the above being the only one which appears in the writs produced, nor is it again noticed in the Returns of this reign."[1]

It is very generally stated and believed that the borough, finding the honour of parliamentary representation (involving the payment of two shillings a day to its members) burdensome, petitioned to be disfranchised. And it has even been stated that "in the reign of Henry VII." it paid the sum of £3 16*s.* 4*d.* for the relief.[2] This is pure romance. It is true that many boroughs did purchase disenfranchisement. But Simpson says: "The privilege of electing and sending members was not lost through any Petition or poverty of the Borough, but through the neglect of the sheriffs in omitting to send their precepts for that purpose." And he quotes as his authority "a record now in the Tower of London."

Token Coins

I have not found that Bradninch ever obtained a licence to have a mint. But at least two of its inhabitants issued token coins. The first was a farthing as follows:—

> O. Thomas Pearce of ——.
> R. Bradninch. Mercer—1658.

The second was a halfpenny:—

> O. Henry Richards—his half-penny.
> R. In Bradnedge. 1666—The Cordwainers Arms.

One of these tokens of Henry Richards was found in clearing away the rubbish after the King William Inn was burned down in 1897.

As a contrast to the cold and sombre tone of this

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[1] *The Parliamentary Writs collected and edited* by FRANCIS PALGRAVE, Esq., F.R.S., and F.S.A., 1830, Vol. II., Div. i., p. clxv.; *Prima Brevia Parliamentaria rediviva*, p. 195.

[2] See *Univ. Geog. Dict.*, A. PRICE, 1749.

official sketch of the corporation of Bradninch, it is a relief to add a few touches of local colour to light up its central figure, the mayor.

Jealous for the honour of the corporation of which he was the head, the mayor of Bradninch claimed to have precedence of the mayor of Exeter. This claim rested, in the first place, on the greater antiquity of the borough. The mothers of Bradninch taught their children to remember the claim in the couplet—

Legends

> "Branesh was a borough-town
> When Exter was a fuzzy down." [1]

It was further held that this claim to precedence was confirmed by Exeter's rendering to Bradninch an emblematic act of specific service.

There is an ancient tradition according to which the mayor of Exeter used to hold the stirrup for the mayor of Bradninch as his superior. It is true, indeed, that this particular pretension of our borough's rights was treated with good-humoured raillery by Westcote,[2] who apparently knew more about it than he has put upon record. He says:—

> [Bradninch] "should seem to have some reason for the claim, if the proverbial speech be true, which saith that the mayor of Exeter is to hold the mayor of Bradninch's stirrup when they meet together—which is strange; and yet not stranger, in some men's opinion, than for the emperor to do the like service for the pope, and that we read hath been done." [3]

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[1] Bradninch maintains, that, whatever claims Crediton may have to be older than Exeter, she has no right to filch these immortal lines from Bradninch, their rightful owner.

[2] Others, believing the tradition to have an historic basis, have tried to explain it, by assuming that the superiority of the mayor of Bradninch was only a reflection of the dignity of the baron of Bradninch, who is a royal personage.

[3] *A View of Devonshire*, p. 116.

He goes on to say that in his day Bradninch had lost the privilege, and then he adds:—

> "But however lost there be gentlemen yet (I thank God) living, that have seen the recorder of Exeter hold the recorder of Bradninch's stirrup. You will think perchance it was merriment; and, to say the truth, so do I also."[1]

These words are capable of an interpretation which would imply that, in the judgment of Westcote, there may have been some uncertainty after all as to whether the claims of Bradninch were really indefeasible. And I have not met anything to shew that the important issue was ever decided by a competent tribunal. Nevertheless, the mayor of Exeter may console himself with the thought that he is not the only great personage in Europe whom a cruel fate has forced to endure the hardship of irreconcilable opposition. The emperor, William II., of Germany manages to bear himself, if not always with absolute calm and composure, yet without show of any special apprehensiveness, on account of the dogged refusal of the prince von Witgenstein to recognize his over-lordship. And after all, the mayor has an important advantage over the kaiser. Whereas more than a quarter of a century has elapsed since all the

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[1] p. 117. The truth of the following story is vouched for by an eye-witness. In the autumn of 1833, George Pearse, mayor of Bradninch, and Edward Woolmer, mayor of Exeter, who, it appears, were intimate friends, were shooting together with others at Paradise and Potshayes. When they were about to mount their horses to ride home, at the end of a hard day's work, Pearse, who was a stout and not very active man, feigning himself in difficulties, said to Woolmer, "I wish you would just hold this fidgety beast for a minute till I get into the saddle," whereupon the mayor of Exeter with obliging promptness took the horse by the head, and pulled on the off stirrup leather while his heavy friend mounted. Then with a hearty laugh Pearse exclaimed to his friend whom he had caught napping, "Very good indeed! I am glad to find that the mayor of Exeter does not forget what he owes to the mayor of Bradninch."

mortifying pretensions of his great rival of Bradninch ceased to trouble him, it is only as yesterday that Witgenstein von Witgenstein left off hurling defiance at the Hohenzollern. His unyielding contumacy was, however, supported by all the might of his veteran army—an army quite unique in its numbers. For they told me when I traversed his liliputian dominions with rod and line, that his forces consisted of "drei Mann"—three soldiers.

But be this as it may, if we are to believe all that has been said, it appears clearly from a local tradition that the superiority of the mayor of Bradninch to the mayor of Exeter did not end in mere official precedence. It is reported that at least one civil head of the borough claimed a right that reached still further.

Once upon a time it appears the mayor of Exeter sent out invitations to a banquet to the mayors of all the boroughs of Devon. The messenger saddled up, and came to Bradninch. "Where's t' mayor tu?" he asked of a youngster in the street. "Ther 'e be down ther wer th' laddar's stickn up ginst t' house." The messenger rode down to the house, and asked an elderly man, who was on the ladder mending the thatch, if the mayor was at home. "Wot do 'ee want o' 'im?" said the man. "I got a letter fur 'im fr' t' mayor o' Exter." "Bring un oop ere," growled the man on the ladder. Without a word the messenger got off his horse, climbed the ladder, and handed the letter to his worship. His worship broke the seal, and appeared to be perusing the contents of the letter. Whereupon the messenger laughed outright and said: "Wy, ye be holdin' en opsy down." The mayor turned upon him and exclaimed, with withering scorn, "Yu gurt fule, don e knaw that t' mayor o' Branesh can plaze hisulf wich way 'e reads a letter fra t' mayor o' Exter. Tak thiccy letter back tu t' Mayor an' tell 'un wen 'e zends tu t' mayor o' Branesh agin tu zend t' letter by a fellar wot's got a civil tongue in 's 'ead."

MAYORS OF THE BOROUGH OF BRADNINCH FROM THE ACCESSION OF KING EDWARD VI.

1546. Alexander Lovering
47. John Gyles
48. Thomas Wills
49. Thomas Wills
1550. John Linnington
51. Henry Moor
52. John Lorde
53. John Hooper
54. Alexander Lovering
55. John Downing
56. John Courtney
57. Richard Torre
58. Thomas Warren
59. John Hall
1560. Henry Moor
61. John Dinner
62. John Slade
63. Oliver Twigge
64. John Major
65. John Mortymer
66. Thomas Wills
67. William Ashe
68. Richard Southwood
69. John Hall
1570. Thomas Burnard
71. John Forse
72. John Major
73. Oliver Twigge
74. Henry Lambert
75. John Colchard
76. Richard Southwood
77. Thomas Major
78. Henry Lovering
79. John Forse
1580. John Ware
81. Henry Lambert
82. John Venman
83. John Colchard
84. Thomas Dinner
85. John Lorde
86. Richard Mortymer
87. John Maudit
88. Richard Gyles
89. Henry Lovering
1590. Thomas Knolles
91. Philip Clashe
92. Thomas Dinner
93. John Warren
94. John Hall
95. Richard Earle
96. Anthony Ashe
97. John Murch
98. Robert Tarre *alias* Lowde
99. John Slade
1600. Gyles English
1. Henry Hedmond
2. William Gyles
3. Thomas Harcout
4. Thomas Harcourt
5. John Taylor
6. William Gyles
7. John Warren
8. George Tanner
9. Philip Clashe
1610. Richard Warren
11. Thomas Alway
12. John Wills
13. William Murch
14. Thomas Harcourt
15. Robert Tarre *alias* Lowde
16. Thomas Alway
17. William Murch
18. Thomas Knolles
19. John Taylor
1620. George Tanner
21. Richard Warren
22. John Taylor
23. Gyles English
24. Thomas Harcourt
25. Henry Shapcott
26. John Wright
27. Peter Warren
28. John Dinner
29. Peter English
1630. Henry Shapcott
31. John Dinner

1632. William Forse
33. John Wright (*d.*) / Robert Taylor
34. William Bendell
35. Richard English
36. Gawyn Venman
37. Richard Jerman
38. Henry Vicary
39. Peter Warren
1640. William Forse
41. Robert Taylor
42. John Venman
43. Richard English
44. William Fulford
45. Peter Warren
46. Peter English
47. Thomas Warren
48. John Dinner
49. Philip Moore
1650. Richard Warren
51. Thomas Harcourt
52. John Baker
53. John Dinner
54. Peter English
55. Samuel Whitmay
56. Peter Warren
57. John Dinner
58. Philip Moore
59. Richard English
1660. John Venman
61. Clement Murch
62. Anthony Martyn
63. Samuel Whitmay
64. Peter Warren
65. Thomas Raymond
66. Thomas Pearse
67. John Harcourt
68. John Forse
69. William Fulford
1670. John Venman
71. Robert Jerman
72. Thomas Warren
73. William Baker
74. John Pidsley
75. Francis Pasmore
76. Robert Jerman
77. John Forse
1678. William Fulford
79. Sir John Harcourt, Knt.
1680. Philip Moore
81. Thomas Warren
82. William Dinner
83. Anthony Martyn
84. Thomas Warren
85. Francis Pasmore
86. Philip Moore
87. Clement Murch (*d.*) / Philip Moore, *in ejus loco*
88. Thomas Warren
89. Henry Bowden
1690. Thomas Warren
91. Anthony Martyn
92. William Dinner
93. Walter Kelland
94. Robert Jerman, Junr.
95. Thomas Warren
96. Thomas Warren
97. Thomas Warren
98. Thomas Warren
99. Thomas Warren
1700. John Martyn
1. John Moor
2. Andrew Bowden
3. Andrew Bowden
4. Peter Warren
5. Anthony Martyn
6. Clement Murch
7. Thomas Palmer
8. Richard Jerman
9. Walter Kelland
1710. Stephen Saunders
11. Edward Sainthill
12. John Martyn
13. Andrew Bowden
14. Peter Warren
15. John Moore
16. William Palmer
17. Anthony Martyn
18. Walter Kelland
19. John Saunders
1720. Peter Warren
21. John Martyn
22. John Forse
23. Peter Warren, Junr.

1724. Walter Kelland
25. Anthony Martyn
26. Philip Moore
27. John Moore
28. John Martyn, Junr.
29. James Forse
1730. John Saunders
31. John Wright.
32. William Linnington
33. Peter Warren
34. John Saunders
35. Anthony Martyn
36. Henry Bowden
37. John Martyn, Senr.
38. { Edward Martyn (*d.*) / Philip Moore *in ejus loco*
39. James Forse
1740. John Martyn, Junr.
41. Thomas Bowden, M.D.
42. William Linnington
43. John Wright
44. Thomas Bowden, M.D.
45. Edward Collins
46. Anthony Martyn
47. James Forse
48. Edward Collins
49. Joseph Wright
1750. John Wright
51. William Linnington
52. Anthony Martyn
53. James Forse
54. Joseph Wright
55. William Palmer
56. Anthony Martyn
57. George Sweet
58. John Winsor
59. William Palmer
1760. John Winsor
61. William Palmer
62. William Linnington
63. Charles Richards
64. John Winsor
65. Samuel Linnington
66. William Moore
67. Gabriel Saunders
68. Henry Bowden
69. Matthew Turner
1770. Stephen Saunders
71. Edward Sainthill
72. Samuel Linnington
73. Gabriel Saunders
74. Henry Bowden
75. Edward Sainthill
76. Henry Bowden
77. John Morgan
78. Edward Sainthill
79. John Morgan
1780. Charles Richards
81. Henry Bowden
82. Gabriel Saunders
83. Henry Bowden
84. Gabriel Saunders
85. Henry Bowden
86. William Brutton
87. Henry Bowden, Junr.
88. Gabriel Saunders
89. Henry Bowden, Junr.
1790. Samuel Linnington
91. Henry Bowden, Senr.
92. Gabriel Saunders
93. Henry Bowden, Junr.
94. Samuel Linnington
95. Gabriel Saunders
96. Henry Bowden, Senr.
97. Samuel Linnington
98. Henry Bowden, Junr.
99. Henry Bowden, Senr.
1800. Gabriel Saunders
1. Henry Bowden, Junr.
2. Henry Bowden, Senr.
3. Henry Bowden, Junr.
4. Ellis Bowden
5. Henry Bowden, Junr.
6. Thomas Tanner, Clerk
7. Ellis Bowden
8. Henry Bowden, Junr.
9. William Drew
1810. Ellis Bowden
11. William Martyn
12. Thomas Pearse
13. Daniel Middleton
14. John Dewdney
15. William Drew
16. Daniel Middleton

1817. William Martyn
18. John Dewdney
19. Henry Bowden
1820. William Drew
21. Daniel Middleton
22. John Dewdney
23. Henry Sparkes Bowden
24. George Pearse
25. Thomas Tanner
26. George Pearse
27. William Martyn
28. Henry Bowden
29. William Drew
1830. Daniel Middleton
31. Henry Sparkes Bowden
32. George Pearse
33. Henry Bowden
34. Edward Pearse
35. William Martyn
36. Henry Sparkes Bowden
37. George Pearse
38. Anthony Martyn
39. Charles Drew
1840. Daniel Middleton Long
41. Henry Palmer
42. Henry Sparkes Bowden
43. George Pearse
44. Anthony Martyn
45. David Middleton Long
46. Henry Matthews
47. Henry Sparkes Bowden
48. Charles Matthews
49. George Pearse
1850. John Dewdney
51. Henry Palmer
52. Henry Matthews
1853. Charles Cuming
54. Daniel Middleton Long
55. Charles Matthews
56. Henry Palmer
57. Henry Matthews
58. George Pearse
59. Charles Thomas Cuming
1860. William Henry Besley
61. William Drew
62. Charles Robert Collins
63. Anthony Martyn, Junr.
64. Daniel Middleton Long
65. Thomas Edward Wrighton
66. Charles Matthews
67. Henry Palmer
68. Henry Matthews
69. Charles Thomas Cuming
1870. William Henry Besley
71. C. R. Collins
72. Anthony Martyn, Junr.
73. Daniel Middleton Long
74. Charles Drew
75. Henry Bowden Were
76. Thomas Henry Hepburn
77. Thomas Edward Wrighton
78. Henry Palmer, Junr.
79. Charles Thomas Cuming
1880. C. R. Collins
81. Anthony Martyn
82. Thomas Henry Hepburn
83. C. R. Collins
84. Charles Thomas Cuming
85. Charles Thomas Cuming

RECORDERS

1604. Richard Reynell
1616. Henry Skibbow
1630. Peter Sainthill
1647. Robert Shapcott
1661. Samuel Sainthill
1685. Right Hon. John Earl of Bath
1690. Thomas Gibbon
1700. William Martyn
1710. Sir Thomas Putt, Bart.
1721. James Sheppard
1730. William Colman
1741. Edward Drew
1744. Philip Drake
1753. Edward Collins
1772. Edward Manley
1785. Henry Brutton
1818. Richard John Marker
1855. John Gidley
1865. John Daw

TOWN CLERKS

1720. John Mitchell	1786. Samuel Linnington
1721. Ferdinando Coombe	1801. Thomas Searle
1735. Thomas Gore	1803. Peter Sharland
1742. Samuel Linnington	1850. Henry Bowden Were
1752. George Sweet	1872. Frederic Burrow

Bradninch then was "an ancient borough and corporation by prescription time out of mind," administered with all the paraphernalia of a great municipality,—an ancient guildhall; scarlet-robed officials; a mayor, the superior of his brother of Exeter; a justice, and a recorder; a town clerk in his gown, sergeants-at-mace in silver lace and cocked hats; and constables with staves of office.[1] In his *Short History of the English People*, GREEN says[2]:—"In the silent growth and elevation of the English people, the boroughs led the way . . . they had alone preserved the full tradition of Teutonic liberty. The rights of self-government, of free speech, in free meeting, of equal justice by one's equals, were brought safely across the ages of Norman tyranny by the traders and shopkeepers of the towns. It was in the common surroundings of the townsman's daily life that the real life of Englishmen lay, the life of their home and trade, . . . their ceaseless sober struggle with oppression, their steady unwearied battle for self-government." When we think of Bradninch amply equipped as we have seen with all the apparatus of law and order, and when we read this eulogy of the influence of the towns in England in working out the

[1] In the guildhall may still be seen three scarlet robes, which were worn by the mayor, ex-mayor, and the recorder; two silver-lace robes, two cocked hats, and two maces, which were borne by the two serjeants-at-mace; one black robe, which was worn by the town-clerk; and four staves, which were carried by the four constables. The two serjeants-at-mace appear to have been pluralists, one of them holding the additional office of mayor's serjeant, and the other that of head-constable.

[2] p. 89.

advancement of the English people, we feel a hopeful desire to find that our borough has played a worthy part in the development of that combination of personal liberty and submission to authority, which constitutes at once the pride and the strength of the national character. But its history disappoints us. Having lost all our early records, we have no means of judging the character of the local administration of justice before the eighteenth century except by its fruits. The nature of these fruits as they appeared to contemporaries is unmistakeable.

From the beginning of the fourteenth century Bradninch was the abode and the prey of very lawless men.

Brigandage in Bradninch

On 13th February, 1328/9, Hugh d'Audele complained that "certain evil-doers carried away his goods and £40 in money."[1] A commission issued by the king on the 28th February, 1377, asserts that "certain evil-doers and disturbers of the king's peace came often by night, and with force and arms took and imprisoned, and detained in prison there many of the king's tenants, as well bondmen as free." Some they carried off to the prison in Exeter. Their object was ransom. For the detained were granted 'delivery' on consideration of 'divers fines and redemptions.' In this way "large sums of money were extracted from the king's tenants." There was none of the chivalry which often redeemed the brutality of brigandage in the treatment which these ruffians dealt out to their victims. For "they beat, wounded and ill-treated" them, broke into their houses, carried away their goods and chattels, and threatened them with such horrors of loss of life and mutilation of limb, that many of them dared not stay on in "the said vill," but deserting their homes, they sought refuge with their wives and children among gentler neighbours.[2]

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[1] *Pat. Rot.*, 2 Edw. III., pt. 1, m. 28 *d.*
[2] *Rot. Pat.*, 1 Ric. II., pt. 4, m. 37 *d.*

The Sheriff's Authority defied

We find another glimpse of the lawlessness for which the vill of Bradninch was noted some three hundred years later, in the records of the quarter sessions of the county in the reign of king James II.

They tell how it was declared to be "notoriously evident" that certain persons indicted for "trespasses, contempts, and misdemeanors," were residing and sojourning within the vill and parish of Bradninch; how the sheriff of the county and his officers endeavoured to apprehend the persons so indicted; and how, "instead of being assisted therein by the officers of the said burrough," they were thwarted by them; how the men of Bradninch "by the encouragement of the maior of the said burrough, and other judiciall officers, did oppose the execution of such writts and processe"; how "the said maior declared noe warrants should bee executed in his burrough which came not from himselfe or other magistrates there, and soe, instead of promoting and assisting in the execucon of such writts and processe, imprisoned the ministeriall officer who brought the same, and suffered the offenders to escape." The county magistrates retaliated at their next court of quarter sessions. Declaring it to be fully proved "that the said burroug of Bradninch is *a place of refuge for criminalls* to defend them from the reach of Justice, in contempt of the laws and statutes of this Kingdom,"[1] they determined to apply to the court of king's bench for a writ of *quo warranto* against the mayor and town clerk of the borough of Bradninch.

These side-lights make it evident that Bradninch was not moving on lines which lead towards enlightened liberty. But from the middle of the eighteenth century we possess the written records of the quarter sessions books, and these shew us the inherited system of local

[1] *Quarter Sessioms, from Queen Elizabeth to Queen Anne*, by A. H. A. Hamilton, London, 1878, p. 245.

government in full operation. The proceedings, it must be confessed, were at times unproductive of good. But at least they never failed to be magnificent in official formality. Nothing could be more grandiloquent and impressive than the following:—

> "Bradninch Borough & Liberty in the County of Devon
>
> The General Quarter Sessions of the Peace held by adjournment at the Town Hall in Bradninch, in and for the Borough and Liberty aforesaid this ffourth day of October in the Ninth year of the Reign of his present Majesty King George the Third before Henry Bowden Esqr. Mayor, Edward Collins Esqr. Recorder and Gabriel Saunders Esqr Justices of our Sovereign Lord the King within the Borough and Liberty aforesaid to keep the peace there and also to hear and Determine Diverse Trespasses ffelonies and other Misdemeanours done and Committed within the said Borough and Liberty."

Four times a year forty or more of the inhabitants were summoned to serve at quarter sessions on grand, or petit juries, or as constables, although it often happened that there was no business to transact. These duties were most unpopular, as appears from numerous entries in the records:—

> 8th Oct. 1766. "Henry Rabjohn Serjt-at-mace having in open Court made oath that he did personally summon John Hopkins of Bradninch aforesd, Butcher, and Abraham Elliott of the same place, Tanner, to attend and serve on the Grand Inquest of our Sovereign Lord the King at this Sessions, and they having made Default in their appearance this Day, Each of them by Order of the Court are ordered to be fined Two Shillings and Six-pence, and they are Each of them, fined that accordingly. William Salter, Cordwainer, being Sumond on the Petit Jury and not attending fined One Shilling."

But it was not merely the parishioners generally—from whom the jury-panel was struck—that were slow to give attendance. The 'burgesses,' and even the 'masters' themselves were sometimes given to evasiveness in this particular, as appears from the following entry:—

"Wee the Mayor, and Recorder, Justice, Capital Burgesses, and Assistants, of ye Borough and Corporation of Bradninch, whose names are subscribed, do hereby consent and agree That if any Burgess or Master of the said Corporation shall, upon due notice of any Sessions or other publicque Co'rt or Meeting for the weale of the said Corporation, neglect or refuse to appeare according to such Notice or Summons, and shewing no just cause, to be allowed by the Majority of the said Masters there (whereof ye Mayor for the time being to be one), shall for every such offence forfeit, loose, and pay to the Mayor and Burgesses or Masters (for the time being there present) to be spent, the summe of Three shillings and six pence. Dated the third day of August *Anno Dom.* 1730.

"James fforse, Mayor

John Martyn Juner
John Martyn
Peter Warren

John Saunders
Henry Bowden
michael Frankpitt
W. Linnington."

This agreement served a double purpose. It was a fillip to the laggard. And it ministered to corporate conviviality.

A piece of business which was constantly before the court was the 'qualification' of persons appointed to various official positions. The narrow spirit of the law in those days applied certain tests before it admitted men to public office. Thus we find it recorded that, on

5th Jan 1764, "At this Sessions Edward Collins, Esq produced a certificate of his having received the Sacrament according to the usage of the Church of England in order to Qualify himself as Captain in the Eastern Regmt of the Devon Militia, and he took the oaths appointed to be taken, and subscribed the Declaration against transubstantiation in open court."

The officials of the borough, of course, were not exempt from these tests. Before entering upon his office it was required of each of them to 'qualify.' It

is therefore somewhat surprising to find that at the quarter sessions in January, 1773, neither the mayor, nor the recorder, nor the justice who occupied the bench, seems to have 'qualified' before taking his seat. Space was found to interpolate among the proceedings of this session an entry of the 'qualifying of the mayor,' obviously written at a later date. Three months later we find this entry:—

> 21st April 1773,—"At this Sessions, Edward Manley Esqr. Qualified himself to act as Recorder, and one of his Majestie's Justices of the Peace for the Borough and Liberty afore said, as did also Edward Sainthill Esqr to act as one of his Majestie's Justices of the Peace for the said Borough and Liberty for the year ensuing, and they severally took the oath directed by Act of Parliament after having produced proper certificates Legally attested of their respectively Receivd the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper according to the usage of the Church of England and severally subscribed the Declaration against transubstantiation in open court."

This necessity to 'qualify' for office was sometimes used as a means of escape from irksome duty. On the 21st December, S. Thomas' day, 1774, Mr. William Forse was duly chosen to the office of mayor for the year ensuing. But because he had not "received the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper according to the Rites of the Church of England in any time of the last year, nor for many years last past," the election was void in law. And as Mr. Forse had been a member of the corporation for a great number of years, and had publicly "declared that he never had, and never would, qualify himself, that he might thereby avoid serving the office of the said borough," the majority of the burgesses "being advised that there was no method in law, by *mandamus* or otherwise, to compel him Execute the said Office, disfranchised and removed the said William Forse from the office of a Capital Burgess." The signatures to this act of disfranchisement are:—Gabl. Saunders, Mayor; Saml. Linnington; Hen: C. Manley;

Edwd. Sainthill: Henry Bowden; Stephen Saunders; John Morgan.

Much of the time of the court was expended in taking and discharging, exhibiting and filing recognizances. I print one single extract to shew the nature of this important business:—

> "18th July 1765. Thomas Leigh of Bradninch being called on his recognizance on the Complaint and information of Robert Palmer of Bradninch afore-said, Yeoman, the sd. Robert Palmer not appearing at this Session, and a paper being produced by the said Thomas Leigh, to the following effect to wit.—"July 16th 1765. Recd. of Thos. Leigh ye Sum of one Shilling in ful for Damages and cost of Sute in respect of Binding the side Thos. Leigh to the Peace and Nothing Else as Witness my hand attested
>
> "Robt. Palmer.
>
> "Jno. Pratt, Junr.
> Elias Jarman.
>
> "This paper Writing being produced, and the due Execution thereof being proved by the Oath of the said Jno. Pratt, Junr. the subscribing witness the sd. Thos. Leigh was by the Court ordered to be discharged from his Recognizance, on paying his ffees, which was accordingly paid."

A very large proportion of these recognizances, I regret to say, had to do with offences which were lamentably prevalent. Nothing is more distressing in the perusal of the borough records than the perpetual recurrence of warrants granted, charges heard, committals to "gaol or the house of correction," and securities taken "to indemnify the parish," or "recognizances to abide the order of the next Quarter or General Sessions," under Act 6, George II., cap. 31.

The interference of the magistrate with the people's liberty to eat what bread they preferred, less than one hundred and fifty years ago, sounds strange to-day.

> "Ordered also at this court as follows:—Whereas, in and by an Act of Parliament passed in the thirteenth year of the Reign of his present Majesty King George

the third (1773), the justices of the peace within their several and respective jurisdictions at their General Quarter Sessions of the peace are impowered to prohibit (if they think proper) the making Baking or Exposing to Sale any better or whiter sort of Bread than the Standard Wheaten Bread therein specified, The justices aforesaid do therefore in pursuance of the said Act at this General Quarter Sessions of the Peace, Order and Direct that from and after the Seventh day of November (being one month from the date hereof) no Baker or Maker of Bread for Sale or any other person or persons whatsoever shall or do make Bake Sell or Expose to Sale within the Borough and Liberty aforesd. any finer better or whiter sort of Bread or of Superior Quality than the Comon Standard Wheaten Bread directed and ordered by the Said Act, and that they do respectively make the said Standard Wheaten Bread agreeable to the Table exhibited in the said Act, and that this Prohibition do continue in fforce for three Months from the said Seventh day of November next, unless sooner revoked."

Apprenticeship

In nothing, it would seem, was the authority of the corporation more beneficently exercised than in their oversight of apprentices. And this was very necessary if, as the records lead us to judge, it had grown into a custom with some of the burgesses to take apprentices whom they did not want, and could not support. Two entries in the same year point to the prevalence of the practice:—

"Bradninch Borough and Liberty

ffor as much as it plainly appeareth that John Brice of Bradninch aforesaid hath not sufficient employment for Thomas Collyns, his Apprentice, neither doth allowe to sd Apprentice a competent maintenance in meate drinke, or any other necessaries, We doe hereby, for the reasons aboves, as also by and wth the consent of Julyen, the wif of the said John Brice, discharge the said Thomas Collyns of and from the said Apprenticeshipp. Witness our hands and seals this sixteenth day of March, *Anno Dom.* 1682."

"For as much as it evidently appeareth to us whose names are hereunder written, that John Brice of our pish of Bradninch hath not sufficient imploymt for James Murch, his apprentice, neither doth he allow him a competent

maintenance, Wee therefore for the reasons above, as alsoe att the request of Julyan, the wife of the said John Brice, and upon the complaint of the said James Murch, have and do hereby discharge the said James Murch of and from the said Apprenticeship. Witness hereunto our hands and seals, the seaventeenth day of January, *Anno Dom.* 1682-3

"Will: Denner, Maior
Sam: Sainthill, Recorder
ffra: Pasmore
Philip Moore
John Pidsley."

Even parents were sometimes tempted to bind their own children in the fetters of apprenticeship, lest they should lose the benefit of their labour:—

"Whereas it plainly appeareth to us that Richard Lemat hath not sufficient employment for his sonne Richard, his pretended Apprentice, neither doth he allowe him reasonable maintenance either in cloths or Dyet, and that the sdd Richard the elder hath releife of the pish of Bradninch, Wee doe therefore, for the reasons above sd dismisse and discharge his said sonne, his prtended Apprentice, from his Service. Witnesse hereunto our hands and Seals this 29th day of November, 1682.

"Tho: Warren, Maior
Sam: Sainthill, Recorder
Will: Denner
Philip Moore
Anthony Martyn."

Water Supply

In one form or another the water supply of the town was constantly coming before the court. In early days the higher part of Newhaven Combe was formed into a park or home-farm belonging to Bradninch Palace. The site was no doubt chosen on account of the abundant spring of good water that wells up in that place, and gave to Well Park the name which it still retains. This stream, known indifferently as 'the town lake,' or 'the shut lake,' supplied the Saxon town of Newhaven. And when the town grew

up the hill beyond Church Lane, the stream was diverted from its natural course, and was made to run in an open channel[1] through Peter Street, across the highest point of Fore Street, through the brewery yard, and down old Back Street. Along its course at intervals, corresponding pretty much with the supply taps which we now have, the stream was made deeper and broader, to enable the householders to get their 'pot water' from it.

On the 5th January, 1764 a rate was ordered for the repair of the town lake. In May the same year this lake was again before the courts, when they ordered a rate of threepence in the pound to be made, "so as to keep the pot water in its proper channel, or otherwise that a subscription might be opened to be collected from the inhabitants to answer the aforesaid purpose." Six months later the trouble had increased, for it was then ordered "on a present of the grand jury of the several lakes conveying the pot water to the town of Bradninch being much out of repair, that a rate not exceeding threepence in the pound be made raised and levied on the inhabitants within the said borough according to custom." In fact, "the Jurors of our Sovereign Lord the King" are continually presenting the same persons for allowing "the gutter to become ruinous," and "for permitting nuisances in the street opposite their respective dwelling houses near the Lake which conveys the Pott water."

There came up also the question of roads and bridges to be considered.

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[1] The day on which the supply of water was first conveyed through a pipe was considered so memorable that my predecessor, Mr. Tanner, made an entry of the fact in the church register. "The spring of water that rises in Well-park was brought thro' Pipes into the Town of Bradninch, underground (which always ran open, and above ground before) the month of August Anno Dom. 1835—As witness etc. Tho. Tanner, the Incumbent of Bradninch."

Roads and Bridges

"5 Jan. 1764. Mrs. Watkinson, being presented for a Bad Road leading from Park Gate to Three Bridges, Ordered that the same be repaired within Three Months if the Water permits under the penalty of Twenty Shillings." Three men are presented in 1776 "for not putting Rails at the Three Bridges . . . the said Bridges being dangerous without such Rails." In 1781 the jurors "present the highway between the Town of Bradninch and a Tenement called Palace Coomb[1] (in the Road leading to Tiverton) as being out of repair and dangerous to his Majestie's subjects passing that way."

The same parties are presented year after year, and repeated orders are made. But they appear to have been systematically ignored. The repair of bridges enjoined in 1764 and 1776 had not been carried out in 1778. Clearly the court lacked either the power or the will to give effect to its own decrees.

Equally important was the oversight of chimneys and foredoors. A "chimney too low in the top and too near the thatch," "a bad chimney belonging to the smith's shop" are presented, as well as certain foredoors which had been suffered to become "ruinous and bad."

Protection of Rates

The corporation gave very constant attention to the protection of the ratepayers under their jurisdiction:—

> 18th July 1763. "Thomas Ebbles, being committed to the Common Gaol . o . . . for deserting his wife and ffamily and leaving them Unprovided for and a Charge to the said Parish; . . being this day produced to this Court and by them examined whether he had any Security to offer for his future good behaviour, or if he would make any satisfaction to the Parish and the Overseers of the Poor thereof for the moneys by them advanced to his wife and ffamily, and he refusing to give or produce any Security

[1] The site of the Palace which was the principal seat of the Barons before Rougemont Castle had been given to them. See above, p. 45.

> or to make any satisfaction to the said Parish, It's by this Court Ordered that the said Thomas Ebbles be by Henry Rabjohn, Keeper of the said Common Gaol, taken back, ... and be safely and securely kept there until the next General Quarter Sessions of the Peace to be held for the said Borough and Liberty, and, in case any shall not sooner be held, for the space of six months from the date hereof."

These subjects and others akin to them, such as the cropping of hedges, 'obstructions' and 'pits' in the highways, together with the appointment of officers—sergeants-at-mace, constables, the gaoler, the inspector of weights and measures—occupied much of the time of the corporation.

Stocks

The Bible familiarizes us with the name of the stocks as an instrument of punishment from the time of Joseph ("whose feet they hurt in the stocks")[1] and Jeremiah,[2] to Paul and Silas.[3] In England mention of the stocks for the correction of offenders is found as early as 1324. In 1352 they were appointed to be set up in every village. But the statute would seem not to have been put into very general practice. For we find the commons petitioning the king a quarter of a century later that the law may be carried out. By a statute of 1406 every village and town was to have a pair of stocks. In 1607 drunkenness was made punishable with a fine of five shillings, or sitting in the stocks for six hours.

Up till 1832 our stocks stood fixed in the ground to the north of the shambles, so that the captive looked down the hill. These were replaced in 1835 by the present moveable stocks, which were kept in the guildhall, and brought out to the enclosed space in front of it, when they were required for use. They are now

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[1] *Ps.* cv. 18 P.B. [2] *Jer.* xx. 2.

[3] *Acts* xvi. 24. The term 'stocks' is a sufficiently adequate rendering of the Hebrew word for the instruments of torture referred to, though our stocks are not an exact reproduction of any of them.

carefully preserved in the guildhall. From 1835 onwards they were in regular, though not very frequent use. The records between that date and 1864 are lost. But eye-witnesses have given me the names of four men and one woman whom they remember to have seen sitting in the stocks. Some one gave one of them beer while he was in the stocks, and was fined for interfering with the course of justice.

The following is an extract from *The Report of Charges coming under the Cognizance of the Superintendent at Bradninch*, a book now in possession of the county police:—

"17th Jan. 1864, Summons.
James Williams, Bradninch, Labourer, age 30.
(Charge) Being Drunk.
(Person charging) Superintendent Robert Swain.
(Witness) Do.
A. Martyn, Mayor.
H. S. Bowden, Esq., Magistrate.
Dealt with Jan. 22nd, 1864.
Committed to 6 Hours in the Stocks.

"2nd Nov. 1866, Summons.
Cornelius Pippett, Cooper, Bradninch.
(Charge) Drunk.
(Person charging) Superintendent Richard Stevens, 1st Class, No. 248, Bradninch.
T. E. Wrighton, Esq., Mayor
12th Nov. 1866.
Fined 5/- and 7/6 costs, to be paid in one week, or six hours in the stocks. (Put in the Stocks.)."

With Pippett the use of our stocks came to an end. The mayor who sentenced him, and the policeman who locked him into the stocks are both still alive (1910).

Pippett[1] is, so far as I have been able to ascertain, the

[1] As Cornelius Pippett holds a unique place in the history not only of our town, but of our country, he shall be honoured by a biographical sketch. He was the son of a cooper at Talaton, who lost both his legs from the falling of a tree. The family migrated to Bradninch, where Cornelius followed his father's trade. He

last person in England who suffered the punishment of the stocks in the regular course of legal procedure. In 1859, and again in 1887, inquiry was made in the pages of *Notes and Queries* as to when the stocks had last been used in England. The correspondence shewed that they were put to use for the last time in 1846 at Newbury; in 1851 or 1852 at Berwick-on-Tweed; in 1857 or 1858 at Walton-on-the-Hill, near Liverpool; in 1858, twice, at Lichfield; and *The Sphere*[1] gives a still later instance in 1863, at Coleshill, Warwickshire. The question was again canvassed at a meeting of archæologists in Exeter last year, and no one present was able to adduce any instance of the use of the stocks so late as 1866. The subject was further ventilated in the press, and readers were invited to communicate any later instance. To that invitation there was no response. Under these circumstances it seems reasonable to conclude that Bradninch is the last place in England to have used the stocks as a customary punishment.

I have heard of two cases in which they have been called into requisition since 1866.

On the 11th June, 1872, a rag-and-bone dealer, whom frequent imprisonment in Reading gaol had not reformed, sat for four hours in the stocks at Newbury, amid the derision of a jeering crowd, for drunkenness and disorderly

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had the reputation of being "a turrble drinkety man." He had a brother in a good position and to him, when sentenced to the stocks, he made an appeal for money to pay the fine. This worthy man's soul was vexed within him by reason of his brother's misdoings, and at first he refused to help him. When the drunkard, however, had sat in the stocks for three hours—one half the term of his sentence—his brother paid the fine, and Cornelius was at once set at liberty. After this he went to Exeter, and there for some years he earned a precarious living by hawking things about the streets on a barrow. He afterwards returned to Bradninch, and took up his abode in Hên Street. He died at the age of 61, and was buried by my colleague, the reverend E. E. Atherton, on the 16th of April, 1891.

[1] 9th September, 1905.

conduct at divine service at the parish church. But this case must be regarded as a revival, rather than a survival, of the punishment of the stocks. No one had been committed to the stocks in Newbury since 1846.

The other case was nearer home. Some one told me that the stocks at Cruwys Morchard had been used within the last few years. I asked the senior churchwarden from that parish, Mr. Henry Beedell—a dear, genial old gentleman of more than eighty years of age—to tell me when their stocks had last been used. "Oh," said he, "I don't know. But I remember my father saying that a man had been put in the stocks in his time. That must be 100 years agone." When I told him that I had been positively informed, on what seemed to be good authority, that their stocks had been used only a few years before, his eyes twinkled, an amused smile broke over his face, and he said with a chuckle, "Oh, I see what you mean. I'll tell you about that." Then he went on to tell me that the son of a neighbour of his, a nice, good boy, of whom he was very fond, got into the habit of 'mitching,'[1] and as the habit was growing on him, in spite of frequent punishment, he sent for the boy and said to him, "Sonny, if this mitching goes on, it will be the ruin of you. But you mustn't be ruined, so I'm going to cure you." "And so," said Mr. Beedell, "I put him in the stocks for an hour, and it did cure him."

Whipping

The punishment of the lash was prescribed by many statutes. In 1530 it was ordered to be inflicted on vagabonds begging without a licence; in 1563 on the servant who sought employment without producing a testimonial from the corporation; in 1624 on women convicted of felony; and in 1797 on any receiving parish relief who refused to wear on his sleeve the red or blue P, the badge of poverty.

[1] *I.e.* playing truant.

We do not know how these several statutes were administered in Bradninch when they first came into force. But if we may judge from what was done at a later date, it seems not unreasonable to suppose that our local administrators of the law never allowed these enactments to remain a dead letter. The following instances, taken from the official records which still exist, will enable the reader to judge :—

> 7th October, 1769—"At the General Quarter Sessions a true bill being found against ff—— B—— for stealing a Quantity of Bacon from her Master William Harris for which she pleaded Not Giulty. She was on a fair Tryal found Giulty to the Value of Three pence, and was by the court ordered to be whipt, and was whipt accordingly in open Court."

> 13th July, 1768—"J—— H—— and Elizabeth his wife having appeared this day before the Justices on the Complaint of the Overseers of the Poor of Parish of Bradninch for leaving their Child Chargeable to the said Parish, Its by this Court Oordered, that the said J—— H—— Contributes Weekly and every Week the sum of seven pence half penny, and pay the same into the hands of Mr Samuel Linnington towards the support and sustenance of his Child And that the said E—— H—— unless she takes care of and provides for her said Child shall likewise Weekly and every Week pay into the hands of the said Mr Linnington the sum of seven pence halfpenny towards the sustenance and support of her said Child till it shall be Bound out an Apprentice, and for any Default in payment of the said sums or either of them by the space of Three Weeks at any one time, that then the Person so Defaulting is hereby ordered to be Committed to the House of Correction, there to be kept to Hard Laber, and to be whipt every Monday morning till all Arrears shall be fully paid, and so from time to time as often as any neglect shall be made in payment as aforesaid."

> 11th January, 1769—"M—— H—— Being arrained for a ffelony Pleaded Not Giulty, but on Tryal was found Giulty to the Value of Tenpence, And by the Court was ordered and sentenced to be Publickly Whipt in the Town Hall, from thence to be Conveyed to the Common Goal of the said Borough, there to be confined for Two Months

and then to be Discharged on finding sureties for her good behavior for one Year and paying the ffee."

14th January, 1773—"R—— J—— . . . for Feloniously Stealing Half a Peck of wheat of the Value of Ten pence . . . was Sentenced by the Court to return Back to Prison from whence he came, and tomorrow to be taken from thence, and conveyed to the Place where the Stocks stand in the Town of Bradninch, and there between the Hours of Ten and Twelve in the forenoon to be publickly whipt and to receive Ten Lashes."

Same date—"M—— T—— for Feloniously stealing One Linnen Shift of the Value of Ten pence was Sentenced by the Court to be publickly whipt in the Guild Hall immediately after the breaking up of the Court and to Receive Ten Lashes."

4th October, 1775—"T—— N—— for Feloniously stealing taking and carrying away Two Iron Hangings of a Gate of the Value of Sixpence —— is Sentenced by the Court to be taken from Hence, Stripped, and be publickly Whipped in the Town of Bradninch from the Guild Hall to the Stocks, and from thence back again in which space he is to receive Twenty Lashes."

9th January, 1783—"H—— G—— Labourer," for stealing "One pair of Worsted Stockings of the Value of Ten pence" was "Sentenced to be remanded back to the Prison from whence he was taken, and to be taken from thence tomorrow by Twelve o'Clock Noon, and to be stripped naked on the Back, and publickly whipped in the Town of Bradninch aforesd. from the Guild Hall to the Stocks, and from thence all the way back again to the Guild Hall."

This whipping did not cure him, as the next extract shows :—

16th July, 1783—"H—— G—— of Bradninch aforesd Labourer being Indicted for Feloniously Stealing Two Drakes (or Male Ducks) the Property of Robert King of Colebrook within the Liberty and precincts of Bradninch aforesaid (from the grounds of the said Robert King within the Jurisdiction of this Court) pleaded Not Guilty, and being put on his Trial The Jury by their verdict Declare him to be Guilty of the said Felony or petit Larceny whereof he

stands Indicted, and thereupon the Court proceed to Judgment, which is That the said H—— G—— be remanded back to the Prison from whence he was taken, and to be taken from thence tomorrow by Twelve o'Clock at Noon, to be Stripped Naked on the Back, and to be publickly whipped in the said Borough from the Guild Hall to the White Hart Inn in Bradninch aforesaid, and from thence back again, then to be again put in Gaol, and the next day to be taken from thence and be whipped again in the same manner from the Guild Hall to the White Hart Inn as before, and back again, after which to be imprisoned for One Week and then to be Discharged."

14th July, 1784—"H—— E—— for running away and leaving his Family on the Parish" . . . was "adjudged to be an Incorrigible Rogue and therefore it is Ordered that the said H—— E—— be Remanded and Detained in the said House of Correction for Two Weeks, and then be whipped and Discharged."

17th July, 1786—"At the Court A—— M—— of Bradninch aforesd. Spinster is Indicted for Feloniously Stealing One Linen Shift of the Value of Tenpence, the property of Edward Hill from and out of his Linney within the Barony and Liberty aforesd., and the jurisdiction of this Court, to which she pleaded Not Giulty, and being put on her Trial the jury by their Verdict Declare her to be Guilty of the said Felony and petit Larceny whereof she stands Indicted, and thereupon the Court give judgment, which is That the said A—— M—— be taken back to the Prison from whence she was taken, till four o'clock in the afternoon of this present Day, and then be taken from thence, and be Stripped Naked on the Back, and to be publickly whipped in the said Borough from the Guild Hall to the Stocks and back again and then to be Discharged."

22nd October, 1849—"W—— T—— (43) For feloniously stealing one Bushel of apples value one shilling was sentenced to be imprisoned ten days with hard labour, and to be once privately whipped."

21st October, 1852—"A—— H——(30) For feloniously stealing one bushel of apples value one shilling" was sentenced "to be imprisoned ten days with hard labour, and to be once privately whipped."

I have chronicled this large number of cases, not for the pleasure which my readers are likely to get from so gruesome a record, but to shew the variety and sometimes triviality of the offences punished in this way, and also to draw attention to the shortness of the interval which separates us from this ferocious administration of the law.

Another case which I do not find recorded in the quarter sessions book deserves to be mentioned. Eliza Ellis, whom I buried in 1902, told me that she remembered seeing a woman about thirty years of age whipped at the cart-tail from the guildhall to the White Hart and back again for stealing changes, *i.e.* clothes at wash. Eliza Ellis was born in 1820. She thought she was about six years old when she saw old Harry Bulley whipping the woman. If the testimony of Eliza Ellis be trustworthy—and I have no reason to doubt it—this case is very remarkable; because an act was passed in 1817 to put an end to the public whipping of women, three years before the birth of one who witnessed such a public whipping in Bradninch. Laws passed at Westminster appear to have been slow in making themselves felt "within the jurisdiction of the Borough and Liberty of Bradninch aforesaid."

Such for the most part were the sentences pronounced by the court. But it sometimes imposed heavier if less ruthless penalties. Thus, we find that on the 15th of July, 1855, J—— C——, who had already been convicted of felony on the 12th of September, 1854, was found guilty of stealing 167 lbs. of potatoes valued at 12 shillings, and was sentenced to four years penal servitude. The like sentence was passed on the 16th of April, 1857, on [a girl] S—— G—— for feloniously stealing 8 lbs. of brass, value 6 shillings.

Penal Servitude

The reformatory effect of all this severity was not satisfactory. No longer, indeed, do we read of Bradninch being a home for brigandage, or a shelter for criminals.

But its inhabitants continued to enjoy an evil report. The authorities seem to have been consistent in their stern, determined, and even merciless application of the sanctions of the law. And men who record the exceptional gracelessness of the people at the end of the eighteenth century bore approving witness to the vigour of the mayor's administration. Simpson says:—

Severity deemed needful

> "The Mayor and Burgesses preserve their authority and govern the inhabitants with great strictness: and in short it would otherwise soon be one of the meanest market towns, with the most refractory inhabitants perhaps in the whole country. I consider this strictness in the Corporation therefore as highly beneficial."

A generation later, Davis, who revised Simpson's Survey, takes the same view. He writes:—

> "The ancient priveleges belonging to the Corporation of Bradninch seem to be fully kept up. The authority of the Mayor and Magistrate has suffered very little since Mr. Simpson was at this town, and appears to be now settled in a few families who will exert themselves to maintain this power in a more respectable style than Decayed Borough Towns in the West of England have of late years been enabled to do."

A story is told of one of the mayors which discloses the spirit of petty tyranny in which this dragooning of the people was sometimes carried on. Mr. Daniel Middleton, when mayor, hurried home on one occasion from Exeter market, in order to be in time to try a prisoner who, as he knew, was to come before the court on that day. He was a little late. He rushed up the stone steps into the court, panting and blowing, and was told that the man had just been sentenced to a fortnight's imprisonment. "Bring en back," he shouted, "nail en ther, try en again, I owes en a grudge, I'll nail en fur a month." The mayor's judicial intentions were foiled. But his words fell on listening ears. The next

time that he sat on the bench, another prisoner, being found guilty, exclaimed, "I knaws ee—yew'll nail me for a month." "Yew'm wrong," rejoined the mayor, "I'll nail ee for tew months." And from that day to this he is spoken of as 'Nailer Middleton.'

There was happily only one 'Nailer' Middleton, mayor. But abundant illustration is forthcoming which shews how very indifferently the corporation understood its official responsibilities. I take the following from the records of the corporation and from a Blue Book containing the *Report from the Select Committee on Municipal Corporations, with the Minutes of Evidence taken before them*, 21st March, 1833.

Tyranny by Law

Vennleigh, the first house on the right as you go into the town from the vicarage, then a small thatched cottage, was owned and occupied by Henry Bowden, surgeon, a man of seventy, a master of the borough since 1785, who had been ten times mayor. A narrow lane fourteen feet wide divided Vennleigh from another house, the older portion of the residence now known as Earlsland, where lived Henry Sparkes Bowden, also surgeon, son of Henry Bowden, a master since 1812, who had been mayor in 1823, and again in 1831. The lane led to a public well, known in the fourteenth century as Chalkwell, now called Cholwell, Charwell, or Charrell.[1] This well enjoyed a high reputation among the poor people who lived in Western Town. From time immemorial the lane had been used daily by more than two hundred of the inhabitants for the purpose of fetching water from the well. Quite suddenly it was closed by order of the justices, and two high walls were built across it.[2] The

[1] See above, p. 43.

[2] Behind Vennleigh, and separated from it by a paved courtyard, stood the doctor's surgery and dispensary. The entry to this building was through the lane. And as the doctor had no desire to shut the public out from his home of healing, the wall which closed the right of way was built across the lane below the entrance to it.

closing of the lane did not, it is true, close the well also. But whereas the lane had given access from Western Town to the water in one hundred and seventy yards, Charwell could no longer be reached without going round a distance of half a mile. This naturally caused much inconvenience. And it was estimated, that at least one hundred and fifty people who had heretofore drawn water from the public source, were now dependent on the favour of their neighbours for their daily supply. The poor people who were affected came to the next court of quarter sessions with an appeal, or what they intended to be an appeal. But their remonstrance partaking of the character of a petition, or of a complaint, rather than of an appeal in due legal form, the court held that there was no appeal, and proceeded to confirm the order for closing the lane.

The inwardness of the whole proceeding springs to light, when we read the evidence given before the committee by the mayor, George Pearse, an attorney, who had been a master of the borough since 1822. He admitted that the appeal must have been to the same magistrates in quarter sessions who had made the order in petty sessions.

Thus what had always been public property was cut off from public use, and before long the owners of the adjoining land had levelled the banks, and thrown the lane into their own gardens.

The Guildhall and Borough Gaol

History tells us nothing of the building of the first guildhall. It is said to have been rebuilt on the original site in the reign of king Henry VI. (1422-61). It is not unreasonable to suppose that it may date from the time when Reginald gave his first charter to

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The Western Town end of Charwell lane remained open, and continued to be a favourite haunt and playground for the boys of the town till the house was enlarged, and the present entrance gate was erected some time in the eighties of last century.

Bradninch in the twelfth century. The newly chartered burgesses no doubt erected some official building. And it would have been very natural for them to place their home of justice and government in the most prominent position in the town. As we have already seen, it was laid in ashes in 1666. It was rebuilt on the same site, retaining apparently its primitive plan and design.

The Borough Gaol

The very names of "Guild Hall and Borough Gaol or House of Correction"[1] sound imposing. When we associate in our minds the thought of the guildhall and of the borough gaol with the thought of charters granted by a grandson of William the Conqueror, by king John,

Old Guildhall and Borough Gaol

and by king James I.; when we associate the edifice also with the tradition of parliamentary representatives, and with a proud list of mayors of the borough, shewing their uninterrupted succession since 1546, we are not unnaturally prone to conjure up before the mind's eye

[1] It is a noteworthy characteristic of the documents, from which the greater part of my information is drawn, that they are rarely content to denote any object by a single noun substantive, or to describe any action by only one verb. This peculiarity is itself a survival from much earlier times.

a venerable pile of massive, time-worn stone-work. But the stern truth of history dissipates this fond illusion.

The guildhall and borough gaol, together with the Green Dragon, formed one building. The gaol was on the ground floor to the east. The Green Dragon, for only half its length two stories high, was to the west. The guildhall proper, which was built above the gaol and one half of the Green Dragon, was approached from Mill Way by a flight of stone steps furnished with an iron rail, and ending in a stone platform supported by an arch. It was lighted by three windows looking to the south. Like the rest of the town, it was built of cob, and thatched with straw. I have not been able to learn anything of the internal arrangements of this court of justice, as my informants, who were young when it was destroyed, knew it only from the outside.

In 1764—nine years before John Howard became sheriff of Bedford—the authorities of Bradninch found the borough gaol to be in an unsatisfactory condition. In the quarter sessions book for that year we find the following order :- -

> 30th May, 1764—"The Common joal of the said Borough being by the Grand Jury presented not to be in a sufficient State of repair to detain persons Committed thereto: Ordered: Mr. John Morgan Surveys and makes an Estimate of the Costs, Charges and Expenses that Will attend putting the same in sufficient repair for the Detention of the Several persons to be Committed thereto on or before the next sessions to be held for this Borough and Liberty."

The deficiency here referred to had reference to the insecurity of the gaol as a place of detention, not at all to its unhealthiness as a place of abode. What was objected to was not that confinement in the house of correction was hurtful to men's bodies, but that the house of correction failed to confine men's bodies within it whenever they felt strongly impelled to escape from it. I find no record of what was done to make good this serious defect. A rate was made in July, 1765,

to pay for the repairs that were deemed to be necessary. But it continued to be a very insecure lock-up. For early in 1781 it was found necessary to employ Mr. Robert Drew, jun., at a cost of £1 6*s*., as 'constable for guard' over a prisoner in custody, and 'to convey him to prison'—apparently to some safer place of confinement.

In 1773 John Howard had discovered, to his amazement, that gaolers were not paid a salary by their employers. They were dependent upon fees levied from the prisoners. These fees were sternly exacted. And we read that it was not an uncommon thing for men to be detained in prison for months after a jury had found them 'not guilty,' and that for no other reason than that they were unable to pay the fees due on their delivery from prison. The public conscience of the nation was roused, and early in 1774 an act was passed abolishing gaolers' fees, and opening the prison-gates at once to every one against whom the grand jury did not find a true bill. The mayor and justices put this enactment in force. And in accordance with this law we find the following order:—

> 4th October, 1774—"Ordered that Mr. Middleton, the Treasurer, do pay unto Robert Matthews,[1] the Master and Keeper of the House of Correction for the said Borough and Liberty, the sum of Twenty shillings quarterly to commence from Michaelmas last as a salary for his trouble and care in the said service, and for receiving of such as shall be weak and sick in his custody."

In the same year, however, a further enactment required all justices of the peace to see that the walls and ceilings of all prisons within their jurisdiction were scraped and whitewashed once a year at least; that the rooms were regularly cleaned and ventilated; that infirmaries were provided for the sick, and proper care taken to provide

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[1] Mr. Robert Matthews was a pork-butcher.

them with medical advice. This enactment does not appear to have had any very great immediate effect upon the powers that ruled in Bradninch. I find no record of further outlay on the gaol until 1790, when Mr. Tremlett was paid "for iron abt. the gaol, 6*s.* 6*d.*" And in the following year £6 4*s.* 5*d.* was paid for "Timber, Stones, Lab. etc. about the Bridewell." In 1803 there is a further charge for £3 8*s.* 3*d.* paid "to Charles Fare, for repairs of Prison as per Bill." And in 1804 Mr. Ireland was paid £1 14*s.* 6*d.* "for laths etc. for the Prison." But all this tinkering was only so much labour lost. The gaol refused to become, in any sense, a place of safe keeping. At last the authorities determined to act with vigour. Accordingly on the 26th of April, 1813, certain grand-jurors "viewed and examined the state and condition of the gaol and house of correction," and on the same day "on their oath they presented it as being in a very bad state and condition." It was not large enough. It had neither timber on its floors, nor plaster, nor even whitewash on its walls. A strong man could break out of it, and the prisoner who was confined in it lost his health. In consequence of this presentment the mayor and one of the justices were appointed to procure "a plan and estimate of such additions and alterations as they might think necessary." At the next quarter sessions on the 19th July, the mayor laid before the court "a plan and Estimation of Richard Squire, Architect, for repairing, altering, and enlarging the Gaol and House of Correction." These were "duly considered and approved." These alterations cost £43 6*s.* 10*d.*

The gaol presumably was now deemed to meet the requirements of the law relating to prisons. But as time went on, and men felt more keenly a desire to act fairly towards the unfortunate inmates of our prisons, it began to dawn upon the corporation that their responsibility did not end with their care for the improvement of the fabric of the gaol. In order, therefore, that

nothing should be wanting to the well-being of prisoners, this further order was made :—

> " 18th October, 1824,
>
> " 1). Ordered that the following Rules, Orders, and Regulations for the better Government of the persons to be committed to the House of Correction for the Borough and Liberty of Bradninch be duly observed and enforced.
>
> " 2). Ordered that every person who shall be committed to the House of Correction be kept to labour, and employed, (unless prevented by ill health, or rendered incapable from old age, or any other bodily infirmity), every day during his or her confinement, (except on Sundays, Christmas-day, or Good Friday), from nine o'clock in the morning to four in the afternoon, allowing one hour for breakfast, and one for dinner.
>
> " 3). Ordered that every person shall be employed according to his or her strength, and ability, regard being had to age and sex.
>
> " 4). That the males and females shall be employed, eat, and be lodged in separate apartments, and shall have no intercourse, or communication with each other.
>
> " 5). That every prisoner shall be paid six pence per day, during his or her confinement, towards their support and maintenance, and to be found clothing and bedding, when required, by the Treasurer, to be paid from the public stock of the Borough."

It would seem as though every one was now quite satisfied that Bradninch had gotten itself at last a gaol of which neither mayor nor borough need be ashamed. But there was one man who felt that the millenium had not yet come. Henry Matthews, then of Broadclyst, afterwards of Duke's, a fine specimen of an honourable Englishman, had his attention specially called to the condition of the gaol by the distressing death of one of his own workmen. He was a strong robust man, who had been imprisoned for thirteen weeks for stealing something of the value of sixpence. His death took place shortly after his release, and it was attributed to the unhealthiness of the gaol, and the lack of the common necessaries of life. He was only allowed water to wash his hands once a week, and if the gaoler happened to be

away on the Sunday he had none till the Sunday following. The gaoler had a daily allowance for supplying food to the prisoners. The wife was permitted to take any food she liked to her husband, but the gaoler kept back part. Mr. Matthews was so moved by the story told him by the widow that he resolved to find out whether the account which she gave of the condition of the prison was true. His first step was to trace all the persons who had been imprisoned at Bradninch during the three years ending in 1829. He found their number was thirteen. He was able to examine seven of the survivors, as well as the friends of three other prisoners, whose death was reported to be due to their imprisonment. The mother of one of these stated that her daughter had been sent to gaol for stealing one pennyworth of apples. Most of the surviving prisoners declared that their health had been injured by their detention. One said he was still suffering from its effects. And one believed he was none the worse.

Mr. Matthews wrote to the mayor, setting out the facts which he had collected. But the mayor took no heed. He then laid the matter before Sir Thomas Acland, who advised him to visit the gaol personally. This he did. What he saw led him to apply to Mr. William Upton Tripp, solicitor, of Silverton, the son of a county magistrate, and himself familiar with county affairs. Mr. Tripp sympathized so heartily with Mr. Matthews' efforts to set matters right that he offered his professional services gratuitously. He first took steps to approach the Lord Chancellor. But a chancery barrister who was consulted gave his opinion that "the lord chancellor had no jurisdiction in this case." In consequence of this opinion Mr. Tripp drew up a petition to the House of Commons, which had appointed a select committee to inquire into and report upon municipal corporations. No inhabitant of Bradninch signed this petition. But one of them—"a large farmer, holding a large estate under a member of the corporation"

—told Mr. Tripp that he would give £5 to be able to sign it, adding, "But I dare not."

This petition resulted in the parliamentary inquiry of 1833. It was then stated in evidence that the gaol proper was a building measuring twelve feet by sixteen feet divided into three apartments—one day room, twelve feet by eight feet, and two sleeping rooms, each six feet by eight feet. There was besides what they grandiloquently called a court, or airing yard, in simpler language, a passage, seven or eight feet long by three feet wide. The prisoners, however, were not allowed the benefit of it, as it was not secure. None of these rooms had either window or fireplace. The only channel through which light or air could find passage into this dreadful abode was a hole in the door of the day room, measuring two feet by one foot two inches, and much obstructed by iron bars. And the only light that reached the sleeping rooms was such borrowed light as could pass from the day room through small openings in the partition. Such was the sum total of the accommodation provided for prisoners, male and female. It is impossible to describe the negation of all the most elementary, the most primitive sanitary arrangements which this building presented. In the euphemistic words of the town clerk, 'There was no drain.' It was the duty of the gaoler—whose total income was £4 a year—to clean out this augean sink. It is easy to imagine how that duty was done, or rather was left undone. It was stated in evidence that no pretence was made of cleaning it, except at long intervals. The prisoners who had lately been confined in it were unanimous in describing the stench that filled the place as being unendurable. Moreover, they all testified that during their imprisonment they had none of them ever seen either magistrate, clergyman, or medical man.

Parliamentary Inquiry

Mr. Bowden, who had been a master for forty-eight years, and had ten times filled the office of mayor,

Mr. Pearse, the mayor of the day, and Mr. Sharland, the town clerk, were all cited to appear as witnesses. Mr. Bowden admitted that in spite of his position as a master, as mayor, and as the medical man of the district, he had scarcely ever been in the gaol. But he considered that from its situation, and the nature of the soil, it "could not be more healthy," and that its "only disadvantage was that it was confined." He had on one occasion made a presentment of it before the magistrates on those grounds. But "some people . . . set up the inhabitants against the rate," and space was limited, so that they could not, unless they "broke in upon the public road, extend the gaol," and therefore nothing was done. Mr. Pearse, the mayor, considered that "it was not in any degree unwholesome." And Mr. Sharland thought that it was none the worse for having no fireplaces, for "it was a very warm prison indeed."

The evidence given before the committee enables us to see what the edifice known as the guildhall and gaol and house of correction of the ancient borough of Bradninch was in reality—a crumbling, thatch-covered building of cob, measuring internally twelve feet by sixteen on the ground floor, and twelve feet by twenty upstairs, the fee simple of which, together with the adjoining public-house, was valued at £200, the guildhall without beauty or dignity, the gaol fit only to be the abode of foul and noisome beasts. Such was this unsavoury relic of the middle ages in the year of grace 1832, when the cleansing fire laid it once more in ruins, this time, thank Heaven, nevermore to be restored.

Money Matters

The way in which a body of men handle money often supplies a good test of the character of their corporate action. An examination of the fiscal methods of our corporation discloses much that is unexpected. The sums of money required to meet expenditure from year to year were not large. Perhaps it was for this reason that there was nothing in the nature of an annual budget, no statement of the sum

probably necessary to be expended in the coming year, and no financial proposals for providing that sum. But whether the amount of public money that passed through the hands of the local authorities was large or small, we ought at least to find a continuous record of the incomings and of the outgoings.

No such record has been found. When the question was asked by the chairman of the parliamentary commission in 1833, "Are any accounts extant?" the best answer that was forthcoming was, "The Mayor, Justice and Recorder audit the Accounts." According to the evidence then given 'a Common Borough Fund' existed—but only upon paper. When money was wanted it was raised by making a 'Borough Rate,' so called not because it was levied from the borough, but because it was made "to meet the Borough Expenses." It was in fact exacted from the whole parish, under a power which enabled them to order the overseers of the poor to pay out of the poor-rate whatever sum they chose to demand for corporation purposes. Of the expenditure of these moneys they rendered no account. It was proved before the commission that Henry Manley, an overseer, refused to pay a borough rate of some £30 to the mayor until he was furnished with particulars of expenditure. But his resistance was futile. The mayor distrained upon his goods for the amount demanded. It was further asserted that the mayor for the time being was in the habit of constantly ordering the payment to him of similar sums, for the expenditure of which he never rendered any account to the overseers. The sums levied were very irregular in amount. The borough lived from hand to mouth, and struck a rate when the chest was empty. I find the following entries:—

1851.	6 Jan.	£50	"To meet the Borough Expenses."
„	7 July	£20	
„	20 Oct.	£20	
1852.	12 Jan.	£20	
„	1 July	£40	

The records in the quarter sessions book were still more irregular. For I do not find any reference to a rate after 1st July, 1852, until 20th April, 1854, when "two Borough Rates of Twenty Pounds each were granted to the Treasurer of this Borough." Yet in the interval all the machinery of the law was in full operation. Richard Haydon, police constable, remembered for an historic struggle with a prisoner, when both rolled together down the bank in front of the old King William, was shewing off his uniform and justifying his existence by bringing up prisoners for trial on such charges as stealing "one bushel of apples value one shilling," "one pockit handkerchif of the value of one shilling," "three lbs. weight of Rags value 6d.," "one pound weight of suet of the value of 3d.," "8 lbs. weight of coal, value 1d," and so on. John Gidley, Esq., deputy recorder, with the aid of the mayor and justices, was trying the cases and sentencing the guilty to imprisonment, hard labour, and the lash. All this administration of justice may not have been costly. But it cost something. And the record expressly tells us that, in every case in which there was a verdict of 'guilty'—and sometimes when it was 'not guilty'—"The expenses of the prosecution were allowed," those expenses including in the case of assault on the constable "three guineas ffee to counsel attending from Exeter." Yet there is no mention at all of any provision made to meet all this expenditure.

Extravagant Expenditure

"At a Court of the Mayor and Burgesses of this Borough, held at the Bradninch Arms Inn, on Monday, the 9th day of August, 1824," an unwelcome discovery was made. When the Treasurer presented his account for audit, it was found "that a large debt would be accumulated at the conclusion of the present year by carrying into execution the Orders of the Court." It was therefore "unnaimously resolved and ordered" that another meeting be held in the same place "to form a resolution for regulating the expenditure of the

Corporation in future, and to adopt some plan for paying off the present debt."

The meeting was accordingly held on the 6th of September. And it was then "resolved and unanimously agreed to, that in the future every member of the Corporation (whether present or absent) should pay five shillings towards the expenses of the dinner at the General Quarter Sessions of the Peace, until the said debt be paid off."

The Court's Adjournments

As has been already stated, it often happened that, when the court assembled, there was no business to come before it. But even then nothing was ever allowed to interfere with the invariable rule of the court that it should adjourn at an early hour to a public house, "to give the Grand Jury an opportunity to make their presentments." These adjournments were gravely set down in the minutes of each meeting as part of the business in hand, and in the account of the adjourned meeting there is always found an item for "the expenses at settlement."

> 5 April 1769 Adjourned to the White Lyon immediately and from thence adjourned to Wednesday the seventeenth day of May.
>
> 3 Oct. 1770. Adjourned to the White Lyon at four o'clock.

	£	s.	d.
16 Oct. 1806, To Expenses at the White Hart on settelling of account		16	0
22 June 1807, To Expenses at White Hart on receiving tenders		5	0
26 Oct. 1808, To Expenses at the White Hart on settling this account	1	14	7

I have gathered from many of the older people that very strong dissatisfaction prevailed in the town in connection with the purchase by the corporation of a public house. In 1808 they seem to have had a great deal upon

their hands. I find a record of no less than fifteen meetings in eight months, whereas during the next five years, the fiscal business of the borough was disposed of in twelve. The 'Special Business' which thus stirred the conscript fathers was the purchase of the house referred to, for a sum of £270. In the minutes of the meeting held on the 14th November we read:—

The Bradninch Arms

> "And whereas we are given to understand that Mr. Henry Bowden, the Elder, has offered to accommodate the Corporation of this Borough with any Sum of Money they may stand in need of on good Security at the Rate of Five per Cent per Annum;
>
> "Resolved
>
> "That the sum of £350 shall be taken up, and borrowed of the said Henry Bowden for paying the said sum of £270 and putting the said Premises in good tenantable Condition for a Publick Inn or Tavern, and that some part of the said Lands and Tenements belonging to the said Mayor and Masters shall be mortgaged to the said Henry Bowden as a security for the said Sum of £350."

Mr. Henry Bowden, junior, and Mr. Daniel Middleton were appointed a committee to effect the necessary alterations. The estimate of £350 was soon found to be too low. Accordingly at a meeting on the 2nd January, 1809, it was resolved:—

> "That the sum of £450 shall be taken up and borrowed of Mr. Henry Bowden the Elder towards paying the purchase Money and putting the said House and Premises in a good tenantable condition fit for a Publick Inn or Tavern, and that some part of the Lands and Tenements belonging to this Corporation shall be mortgaged to the said Henry Bowden as a security for the sum of £450."

A meeting on the 16th February, 1809, resolved unanimously that their new acquisition, the Bradninch Arms, "should be mortgaged to Mr. Henry Bowden as a security for the sum of £450, . . . the premises being annually insured . . . in the sum of £400 for the better

securing the aforesaid sum of £450." Before the mortgage could be carried out Mr. Bowden, the elder, died, leaving his son Henry, then mayor, his executor and residuary legatee. This gentleman agreed, 10th April, 1809, to continue the loan, and to add to it as required another £50. He took as security for the whole £500, not only the Bradninch Arms, but in addition "the close or orchard known by the name of Town Land," for which other lands were afterwards substituted. At the next meeting, seven days later, a resolution was passed:—

> "That the said Committee is hereby authorized and empowered to take upon them the sole management of the said Building, and to contract with any person or persons for completing the same by Midsummer next."

There was thus created a somewhat Gilbertian situation. Mr. Bowden, as mayor, delegates to himself and his trusty colleague, 'Nailer' Middleton, plenary power to use, as a committee, the unlimited authority of the whole corporation in adding to the value of a property of which Mr. Bowden, as private gentleman, had just become the mortgagee.

No sooner was the purchase determined upon than the question of a licence arose. The first step apparently taken to provide this is traceable in the account of a meeting held 5th December, 1808, when

> "it was suggested for the considering of this Meeting, whether the *Green Dragon Inn*, now occupied by Mrs. Mary Linnington, widow, at the annual Rent of Six Pounds and Six Shillings will not admit of some advance; and what annual Rent ought to be demanded for a small parcel of ground known by the name of Little Blenheim now in the tenure of Mr. Henry Bowden the Elder, and also for a small parcel of waste land adjoining the dwelling-house of Mr. James Ireland . . . and
>
> "Resolved
>
> "That Mrs. Mary Linnington, widow, who now occupies the *Green Dragon Inn*, shall be immediately served with a notice to quit the same at Midsummer next unless she shall consent to pay from that period . . . a rent of Eight Pounds per annum."

At the meeting at which the widow's rent was raised, the land in question in the tenure of Mr. Bowden was let at an almost pepper-corn rent. It was resolved:—

> "That a Nett Rent of five shillings shall be demanded of and paid by the Occupier of Little Blenheim, and the Sum of Two Shillings and Sixpence by the Occupier of a small parcel of land adjoining the dwelling house of Mr. John Ireland yearly."

Widow Linnington refused to be driven out, and consented to pay the increased rent.

So they turned their attention to the White Hart, the house regularly patronized by the corporation, and likely to prove an uncomfortable rival to the Bradninch Arms. They had not a shadow of complaint against the publican. But they wanted his licence. So they dispossessed him, and transferred it to the new house. The suppression and appropriation of this licence was regarded as so unjustifiable that it roused angry feelings which had not subsided a quarter of a century later. Mr. Tripp, the lawyer, affirmed before the parliamentary committee that he could say of his own knowledge that the White Hart Inn was suppressed in order to increase the rent of the corporation property.

Twenty years later another committee, consisting of the same Messrs. Bowden and Middleton, appointed by "a court of the mayor and burgesses held at the Bradninch Arms Inn on the 9th day of July, 1827, to examine the accounts of the corporation," reported that a considerable sum was due to the treasurer, "arising from the outgoings far exceeding the annual Rents of the Lands and other Premises belonging to the corporation," and that "they were decidedly of opinion that it would be for the benefit of the mayor and burgesses and their successors to sell and dispose of the Bradninch Arms Inn, and eight other dwelling houses with the orchards and gardens thereunto belonging." They were accordingly sold, and the price realized was £1,243. The

minutes of another court held on the 14th January, 1828, authorized and empowered their committee "in the first place to discharge and pay off a debt amounting to £500 borrowed for the purchasing in the year 1809 the house and premises (Lot I.) [the Bradninch Arms], and in the second place to invest the residue in the purchase of freehold property . . . for the benefit of the present mayor and burgesses and their successors." The residue, £743, was in the bank on the 14th April, 1828. Of this sum £525 was invested in the purchase, from Mr. Henry Manley, of a freehold estate known as Crows' Ash, held at the annual rent of £20, leaving a balance to credit of £218.

From a return laid before the House of Commons in 1833 it appears that the property of the corporation consisted:—

First, of lands in Bradninch held in fee, which then produced an annual rent of £24. On these lands the return makes the following 'observation':—

> "There is no documentary Evidence to prove whether the above Property came into the Possession of the Mayor and Burgesses by Purchase or Devise. But it appears by old expired Leases, as well as common Report, they have received the Produce thereof for many Centuries past."[1]

Second, of "an Estate in Fee Simple which was invested in Trustees for the benefit of the Mayor and Burgesses and their Successors," which then produced an annual rent of £20. After these two items of £24 and £20 have been thus set out, we read that "The Annual Income derived from Corporation Funds . . . as above stated" amounted to £45. On which the town clerk, Peter Sharland, an upright man, makes this further 'observation':—

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[1] I presume these lands were part of the lands originally granted by the lord, who, as Hooker says, "himselffe dyd first lymet and sett and apoynted the boundes of the Towne."—*Harl. MSS.*, 5827, p. 136[1].

> "Except the above I do not know of any other Source from which the Mayor and Burgesses of the Borough derive any Profit, Advantage, or Income."

This is a remarkable observation, for it gives no hint of the disposal of the balance of £218 which, five years before, was in the bank awaiting investment "for the benefit of the present mayor and burgesses and their successors."

Relief Committee

Perhaps the most glaring instance of maladministration is to be found in the account of the work of the Relief Committee after the fire of 1832.

The following persons formed the Committee:—

*Henry Bowden, surgeon; *Rev. Thomas Tanner, vicar; *George Pearse; *Daniel Middleton; *Henry Sparkes Bowden, surgeon; *William Drew; *Robert Dewdney, yeoman; *John Dewdney, papermaker; *Charles Drew, yeoman; *Charles Matthews, papermaker; *John Sharland; *John Matthews, gentleman; *Edward Pearse, gentleman; *Rev. — Sharp, dissenting minister; *— Barton, schoolmaster; *G. F. Andrews, surgeon; William Drew, of Huxham; Henry Matthews, of Broadclist; Thomas Dewdney, of Silverton; Emanuel Boutcher, of Broadclist.

This committee was appointed "to alleviate the personal and pecuniary losses of the poor families" who had suffered. A clear majority were ratepayers, and six were members of the corporation. The committee issued an appeal on the very day of the fire. Mr. Henry Matthews took an active part in procuring subscriptions. Money came in abundantly. The king gave £100. The contributions of "the most wealthy inhabitants of Bradninch" amounted to about £100. Sir Thomas Acland gave liberally. Lord Rolle sent £20, with the express proviso, that no part of it should be "applied to any

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* An inhabitant of the parish.

building." Altogether a sum total of more than £900 was collected.

This money was raised as a charitable fund, for the relief of the "poor sufferers," and of "families rendered houseless, and reduced to the greatest distress and misery." Those who had been burned out were invited to send in to the committee statements of their losses. The task before the committee was necessarily both difficult and delicate. It was a case in which honourable men, in the execution of their trust, might be expected to differ as to the sums which ought to be allotted to the several claimants. However, distribution was made of £800 among the sufferers in such a way as proved satisfactory both to the contributors of the fund, and to all the members of the committee. Even Mr. Henry Matthews—who for some time past had ceased to be in sympathy with the corporation, as we shall see later on—frankly admitted that the £800 had been very fairly applied for the benefit of those for whom it was intended.

The estimated cost of building the new guildhall was £600. No time was lost. The work was begun. But where were the funds to be found? The old guildhall had not been insured. Certain sums of money, however, had been paid by insurance companies to the corporation on account of another house that had been burned down. Out of these they intended to vote £150, leaving a balance of £450 to be raised by a borough rate. This was the position of affairs, when a strange thing happened. Summonses to attend a meeting of the relief committee were sent to certain members, not to all of them. The meeting was held. Those present were:—Henry Bowden, mayor; Henry Sparkes Bowden, master; Daniel Middleton, master; George Pearse, master; John Matthews; Henry Matthews; Charles Matthews; Charles Drew; John Sharland; Robert Dewdney; — Barton.

Mr. Pearse proposed: "That the sum of £100 go to assist in the re-building of the Gaol and Town-Hall."

The resolution was seconded by Mr. Daniel Middleton. This unexpected stroke was too much for the forbearance of Mr. Matthews. It opened the sluices, and the flood of his indignation burst forth. We are able to reproduce, from the evidence preserved in the Blue Book, the chief points at least of his chivalrous remonstrance: "How was it that no notice of the resolution had been given to the non-resident members of the Committee—men who paid no rates in Bradninch? The Committee had no funds from which this £100 could be taken. Claims had been presented to them, which were not yet satisfied, amounting to £600 or £700. And to meet these claims their balance at the bank was only £130. They had no funds out of which to grant £100; but even if they had, they ought not to grant it for that purpose. It would be a misappropriation of a charitable fund created for another object. Some of the committee-men were among the largest rate-payers in the borough. Surely they could not think it desirable to devote a part of the money with which they had been intrusted for the relief of the destitute, to the repairing of the gaol, in order to save themselves from a borough rate. If that £100—which belonged to the poor and needy—were applied as the resolution proposed, the share of it which would fall to some of them would amount to £7 or £8. Could they put that money, which did not belong to them, into their own pockets? Would not the very indelicacy of the act deter them from doing it?" The remonstrance of Mr. Matthews was of no avail. The motion was carried, and £100 contributed for the relief of individual distress was applied to the building of the new guildhall and prison. The facts were never contested.

What has been said shews conclusively that the machinery of government was out of gear. It had, in fact, broken down. Whereas in earlier times the freemen of the borough used to assemble at the guildhall on the 21st December, to the

Atrophy

number of forty or fifty, to 'choose' as mayor for the ensuing year one of two members of the corporation who were nominated to them for that purpose, at the date of the petition only two freemen remained. These were both men between seventy and eighty years of age, and they had long since given up going to the guildhall. When no freeman any longer attended to 'choose' the mayor, the corporation elected one of their own body to the office. And it was not only the freemen who had vanished away. The number of capital burgesses or masters had also fallen off. According to the charter the corporation ought to have twelve members in addition to the mayor. For many years its numbers had not exceeded eight, and this year were only seven, who, as the town clerk deposed, were "as one family." The beginning of the end was in sight.

Police

An important change in the guardianship of the peace within the borough and liberties took place in the year 1865. Down to that year, the mayor and recorder always held their court of quarter sessions without any interference on the part of the county justices. And down to the same date, the inhabitants of the borough did not contribute to the county police rate. But in that year an order was made requiring them to pay the county rate. Against this the borough appealed, but it was held by the court, that, in the absence of a non-intromittent clause in the charter, the county justices must be taken to have had at any rate concurrent jurisdiction in the borough, and that the borough was liable to pay its proportion of county-rate and police-rate. The new arrangement was a compromise between the corporation on the one hand, and the county on the other. The jurisdiction of the county authority, thitherto so jealously repudiated, was frankly admitted. Mr. Collins, superintendent of the county constabulary, was appointed inspector of weights and measures in the room of Mr. Swaine, the constable of the borough. The

policeman's house was let to the county, which paid rent to the corporation for it. Prisoners were thenceforth committed not to the borough gaol, but to the county prison. Cases of indictible offences were to be heard before two justices, the mayor, and the recorder. Charges were to be made as heretofore for the service and return of summonses, but the money received was to be paid not to the police, who were supported out of the county rates, but "in relief of the borough rates." From this decision it is manifest that the corporation contemplated the continuance of its power to levy borough rates. But, reviving from their long torpor under the influence of the fresh current which found its way into the borough by the breaking down of the old barriers, the people took their courage in both hands, and roundly refused any longer to be called upon to provide the corporation with funds over which they had no control. On the 12th October, 1865, it was

> "Resolved that the overseers of the poor should in future resist the payment of all Borough Rates, in-as-much as the Ratepayers are liable to pay County and Police rates."

From this time the independent authority of the corporation was moribund. And, under the operation of the Municipal Corporations Act of 1883, it was finally dissolved on Lady Day, 1886.

The Reckoning and a Moral

The history of the boroughs of England is a noble story, telling how through much difficulty they struggled, fitfully indeed, and with many a set-back, but with the dogged determination of Englishmen, towards the dawning light of civic liberty. It has been the custom to indulge the dream that in the 'long agone' the borough of Bradninch took its place among the foremost municipalities of the country, and that by some ill-luck for which it was in no way answerable, it became a 'decayed borough.' All that I have been able to

discover obliges me to demur to this reading of history. I believe that its golden age is in the future. For it cannot be maintained that it ever secured a leading position from which it afterwards fell away. It never reached the fulness of mature and vigorous municipal life. It would be nearer the truth to call it 'an abortive borough,' or at most a borough of stunted growth. It failed to raise itself to a place among the honoured boroughs on Green's roll of fame, not because its governing body was made up of consciously dishonest men, or deliberate oppressors, but because the system of government, inherited from the past, and demanded by its condition as a municipality, was totally unsuited to its size. The population has never been large enough to furnish a wholesome opposition to such inroads upon public rights as the frailty of man renders inevitable whenever opportunity offers it a chance.

> "How oft the sight of means to do ill-deeds
> Makes ill-deeds done!"

And here the temptation was strong for men to play into each others' hands, on the principle of the homely proverb, "Scratch me, and I'll scratch you."

Puffed up by the possession of privileges bestowed upon it in earlier centuries—privileges which it looked upon as being only rights—the little town never learnt the elementary lesson that no privilege may be enjoyed that does not entail a corresponding obligation. For this reason it never became fit for the position to which the faithful discharge of its liabilities might have raised it. Men of few inches, who are conscious of enjoying some superiority over their taller neighbours, are apt to become self-assertive. Mounted somewhat awkwardly on stilts of their own importance, they make believe that they are in a position to look down upon those who have out-grown them. This characteristic of human nature which is stamped on the individual man, is impressed no less on communities. Little men and

little bodies of men may indeed become great. Mere handfuls of people, as the Swiss, and our own Scotsmen, nurtured in the keen atmosphere of hardship, develop a sturdy manliness which has often given to the world brilliant examples of virtue. But the keen atmosphere was lacking here, for there was no influential public opinion to counteract the temptations to slackness and self-interest. An independent witness deposed that his most intimate knowledge of the locality justified his saying that there were not twelve men in Bradninch whose education and station in life qualified them to exercise such power and authority as the charter conferred on the corporation.

The condition of affairs at last became a public scandal. At the parliamentary inquiry it was given in evidence which there was no attempt to rebut, that Bradninch people complained that they could not get justice done to them; that appeal was useless, seeing that it was often from a judge sitting in one court to the same judge sitting in another; and if not literally the same man, it was to one so intimately connected with him that their views and interests were identical. Thus it came to pass that all public sense of justice was distorted. It became an engrained belief of the people that every man had his own axe to grind, that no such thing as independent probity existed, and that justice, 'even-handed justice,' had fled from the earth.

The people certainly saw through the pretentiousness of the local autocrat, 'dressed in a little brief authority.' Wiser than their superiors, they suffered with an amused smile the childish arrogance that claimed to look down upon the capital of the county. With a true instinct they welcomed the new order of things. The curtain fell upon the brave show of 'robes and furred gowns,' and Bumbledom died.

In its place has arisen a cleaner, more wholesome condition of the corporate life of our old town, which carried out, as we already see it, honourably and in

good faith, will lead it and its lovable inhabitants in this new century to a freedom unknown before, and to the prosperity to which perfectness and righteous dealing always tend. It will learn that communities, however small,

"Of native strength possessed,
Though very poor, may still be very blessed."

The Arms of Richard Plantagenet, King of the Romans, from a tile in the floor of S. Paul's Chapel, in Exeter Cathedral

CHAPTER V

THE PARISH

THE parish of Bradninch, *i.e.*, the circuit of ground committed to the charge of the parson[1]—rector or vicar—of the church of S. Disen, is a very old parish. Though it is not possible to fix the date of its formation, there is no doubt that it is older than the kingdom of England. It embraces to-day not only the manor of Bradninch, but also the manor of Hele Payn, the independent estate of Garland's Hayes,[2] and a considerable number of small freeholds paying quit-rents to the lord of the manor. According to the census of 1901 it has an area of 4,399 acres, and 363 inhabited houses. Its population was in 1801, 1,187; in 1811, 1,321; in 1821, 1,511; in 1831, 1,524; in 1841, 1714; in 1851, 1,834; in 1861, 1796; in 1871, 1,914; in 1881, 1,705; in 1891, 1,708; in 1901, 1,521.

The Parish Church

The parish church has always been the central institution of a parish. There is no mention in 'Domesday Book' of a church at Bradninch, but this is no proof that none existed. For there is ample evidence of the existence of churches—important churches—elsewhere, concerning which the survey is altogether silent.[3] Indeed, less than

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[1] The name 'parson' is the old-world title of the parish priest. It means the *persona impersonata*, the man who, as lawful incumbent, is the representative of the Church in a parish.

[2] See above, p. 62.

[3] ELLIS, Vol. I., p. 287.

half of the existing churches of pre-conquest date are mentioned in 'Domesday,' and some of the most conspicuous Saxon monuments, such as those in Northamptonshire, are likewise ignored.[1] It must not, therefore, be inferred from the silence of the great survey that no church existed here when it was made.

The First Church

As we have already seen,[2] there is reason to believe that the first church in this parish dates from the days of S. Disen. If it was built under British auspices, it was constructed of wattle. If the builders were Saxons, it was made of wood. The Saxons were good carpenters, and the whole of Devon was forest, abounding in excellent timber. In course of time this primitive building gave way to a Norman church of stone. No notable feature of this church, I am sorry to say, has been preserved. Yet some fragments of its masonry are traceable to-day. The south and north walls of the chancel to a height of some ten feet above the level of the ground, and the eastern wall of the present south aisle to a height of some four feet, seem to have belonged to it.

The attempt to build again, in fancy, walls that have been long since demolished fascinates the imagination of the archæologist. And it is oftentimes quite astonishing to find how much may be ascertained from the careful, patient study of a few unpromising data. His study of the relations which subsist between the different parts of living creatures, enabled the great French naturalist Cuvier to reconstruct extinct animals from very fragmentary remains. But there was no certainty of design underlying the work of the men who built our churches, analogous to the ordered action of the great Builder of living creatures, from which it has been possible to deduce the law of 'the correlation of growth.' And

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[1] *The Arts in Early England*, G. Baldwin Brown, p. 77.

[2] See above, p. 17.

therefore the meagre remains of early masonry which have come down to us do not furnish sufficient guidance to enable us to say what the Norman church which stood on this site was like. It would seem, according to one architectural authority, to have been a cruciform building, extending eastward farther than the present chancel, and westward not so far as the present tower. The crossing was surmounted by a low saddle-back tower, like the old church at Littleham. According to another authority it was probably as it is drawn in the frontispiece.

The Second Church

But whatever obscurity necessarily hangs around the Norman church, it is possible for us, starting from certain unquestionable facts, to formulate a conjectural account of the succeeding Early English church, which, in its chief points, cannot be very far from the truth. This church must have covered all the space between the present chancel and the present tower. In 1310 it was a building of sufficient area and importance to admit of the ceremonial function of bishop Stapeldon's ordination.[1] A glance suffices to shew that the present diminutive chancel, standing to this day on its Norman foundations, belongs to an earlier and smaller building. And we know that the present tower is a restoration and an enlargement in 1437 of an earlier one.[2] The Early English church consisted of the old Norman chancel, of a nave reaching as far west as the present tower, and of a south aisle, some eighteen inches narrower than the present aisle. The southern transept of the Norman church—if it had a transept—became part of the south aisle. It was not so lofty as the present church, and the tower was much smaller than the present one. The Early English church was probably built by Richard,

The Third Church

[1] See below, under the rector for that date, ELIAS DE SANCTO ALBANO.

[2] See p. 179.

baron of Bran-es, the great church-building king of the Romans, who in 1261 made Arnold, his own confidential secretary, rector of the parish.

Before it was a hundred years old this church was suffering from the wear and tear of time. For we read that when bishop Stapeldon visited it on the 12th March, 1322, in the presence of the lord Roger Boddleghe, John Holonde, and a large number of the parishioners of Bradninch, he found the roof in a perilous condition, and directed the parishioners to repair it in a proper manner before Michaelmas, under a penalty of ten pounds.[1]

The Present Church

For a hundred years from this date there are no records relating to the church, until the great wave of church-building in the fifteenth century covered the land. And it is interesting to trace in the stones of our church to-day the local growth of this national enthusiasm. Time's record has left behind it no detail of the raising of this enlarged church. The building of it was done piecemeal. Most of it must have been accomplished between 1422 and 1491, in the incumbencies of John Hopton and John Bodeman. On the 16th December, 1437, bishop Lacy granted an 'indulgence' in favour of true penitents who should give their offerings to the rebuilding of the tower. The wording of the register in recording this is remarkable. The 'indulgence' was for all who should contribute "*ad constructionem et emendationem campanilis ecclesie parochialis de Bradenynch de novo fiendi.*" This neat specimen of mediæval Latin implies that the work to be done was at once the building of a new tower, and the renovation of an old one. Experts, examining the stonework of the tower without any knowledge of the terms of this document, have found there independent evidence pointing to the conclusions that the lower part of the tower is

[1] *Ebis. Reg.*, 1307-26, p. 83, and note.

older than the upper part; that in the lower part there are suggestions of Early English work; and that this Early English work has been adapted to the superimposed Perpendicular work. Some have been led to believe that the present tower surrounds and encloses some of the masonry of an earlier structure.[1]

We must remember that these new churches which were rising in such numbers all over the country were not commissioned and paid for by the parochial clergy, for they were poor men, having barely enough to live upon; nor by the nobility, for they were half ruined by the Wars of the Roses; but they were the offerings of the vigorous, religious faith of the rising middle class, out of the wealth which trade and commerce brought them.[2] It is plain that our tower is the noble work of men of limited means, who sought to give to God of their best. There is no elaboration of detail, no excess of ornament. But all is so massive and solid, so well-proportioned and dignified, and the scale of the whole is such an advance upon earlier buildings, as to place it beyond all doubt that the builders were animated by the desire to make the 'House of God,' in comparison with the dwellings of men around it, 'exceeding magnifical.' As the work proceeded this desire grew. In building the tower the architect fixed the height of the arcading which should separate the nave from the aisle in the enlarged church. The respond which he built

[1] For these conclusions the experts have relied upon the existence of certain very massive stones out of which weather-tables have been cut; upon the massiveness of the lower parts of the buttresses; upon the way in which the stair turret is attached to the tower, standing out from it much more than is usual; and upon the uncommon splay of wall between the responds at the end of the arcading, and the jambs of the tower arch. This splay on the south was necessary to mask the stair turret, and the splay on the north side was made, when the north aisle was added, not merely for the sake of symmetry, but for the purpose of concealing a portion of the north wall which was preserved to serve as a buttress.

[2] *Parish Priests*, p. 555.

into the stonework of the tower shews this. But when the time came to build the pillars and arches, appetite had so grown by what it fed on, that the people were no longer content with the simple character of the early mouldings, but they embellished the pillars with the much richer decoration which we now enjoy. They widened the nave, so that the tower arch ceased to be central, and they added an aisle on the north.

Thus our present church came into being. The less important changes which have taken place since then will be recorded in the notices of the successive incumbents.

The Screens

The glory of our church is its two screens. Very little of the woodwork in Devonshire is earlier than the middle of the fifteenth century. The great screen runs obliquely across the whole church. At the base it measures fifty-one feet, and at the top of the groinings fifty-three feet. The cornice above the groinings stretches out into the soffit of the north and south windows. The height of the screen is eleven feet three inches. It is divided into fifty-two panels, one for every week in the year. It was restored in 1843, and ten years later it was recoloured at the expense of Mr. Henry Matthews. The smaller screen now under the tower arch was the northern parclose which shut off the chapel of S. John the Baptist. It was removed to its present position in 1841. Our two screens are bracketed by Harry Hems with some dozen others in a class by themselves, as 'DEVON'S BEST SCREENS.'

Most of the Devonshire screens are marked by a strong family likeness. And it has been suggested that this may be accounted for by supposing them to have been constructed under the direction of artificers trained in Tavistock Abbey. A careful examination of our own screen makes it clear to anyone who has practical experience in the use of tools, that the skill of the men who actually wrought it was very unequal. There are parts of it where the workmanship is extremely rude,

while the delicacy and clean finish of other parts reveal unmistakeably the true master's hand. Regarded from the point of view of the worker in wood, it seems to confirm some such theory. The date of it is variously fixed by experts as from 1450 to 1480. An inscription on the eastern side of it shews it to have been painted in 1528.

The reverend William Arthur Strong—vicar from 1876 to 1888—made a careful study of the paintings on the screen, and what follows is taken from notes printed by him in the parish magazine:—

> The builders of the screen doubtless had some particular design which determined their choice of the figures painted on the various panels. What their purpose was, it is hard to say, and that which makes it so extremely difficult lies in the fact that what are are called the 'symbols' have been in so many instances painted over. The 'symbol' is that which in an especial and appropriate way serves to distinguish and mark out this or that saint. Thus S. Peter is usually painted carrying keys, S. George with a dragon at his feet, and so on. So that I do not give the following relation as certainly the correct solution, but that which is the most probable interpretation.
>
> Let us stand in the middle aisle, and shut the central doors. The panels on the door set before us the mystery of the Incarnation. Those on the south side tell of man's 'shameful fall,' then some of the chief types of our Lord, then our Lord Himself, as the object of all praise and worship. Those on the north side contain figures of the sibyls (of whom more hereafter), 'the unconscious heathen witnesses of our Lord,' as they have been called; and on the north door the four great 'doctors' (*i.e.* teachers) of the Western or Latin Church, *viz.* SS. Augustine, Jerome Gregory the Great, and Ambrose.
>
> The two panels on the north wing of the central door tell the story of 'the annunciation.' The words are in Latin, for the English Bible was then not yet published. Note the address of the angel, 'Hail, thou that art highly favoured, the Lord be with thee.' The subject on the two panels on the right or south wing is 'the salutation of Elizabeth.' Evidently these subjects have to do with, and are, so to say, lesson-books of the mystery of the Incarnation.
>
> On the south side, the first two panels tell the story of 'the temptation.' It is curious how the tempter is drawn

with a woman's face. The idea, apparently, which moved the painter was common enough in those days, and surely it contains a great truth, that we are most easily tempted by that which is most like ourselves, by that which is most congenial, by that which most easily and most subtilly lays hold of us. It is easy to read the meaning of the next two panels. It is 'the expulsion of Adam and Eve from the garden of Eden.' The next group of four panels probably relates to the period of the Judges. The first is, most likely, Samson, with the jaw-bone in his hand. And is not he upon whom 'the Spirit of the Lord came mightily,' a meet type of our Lord—the Almighty Conqueror, Who, by His death overcame death, and by His resurrection burst through the bars and gates of hell? The next figure may be Deborah—but there is no symbol—Deborah, the wise, the lofty, the inspired prophetess, as in some sort shewing forth the surpassing wisdom of Christ, and His marvellous power to move and influence the hearts of men. Then comes the man with outstretched hands. There is no symbol again. But it may well be Samuel, the prophet, the intercessor, who cried all night long in prayer, and who is a worthy type of our Lord's all-availing intercession. The next figure has no symbol. It may be, possibly, David, the king. And is not he a type and shadow of the Christ, 'the root of man's promised healing fruit,' Who is the true Ruler and King of men?

Pass on beyond the figure on the pedestal. On the first panel there is a representation of Jesus Christ, as a child. His right hand is raised in the attitude of blessing. The ball which He carries in His left hand is the world, for the sake of which He was content to become incarnate.

It is extremely difficult to decipher who and what the figures beyond are. It is clear that they are praising and singing. Some of them have books of music. It has been suggested that one or two of the figures have been misplaced, and that they ought to form part of the group of sibyls. But, as the symbols are effaced, we can only conjecture.

The next four figures are unintelligible. The heads are good, and are carefully drawn, and are part of the original screen. The rest are all modern, and the less we say of them the better.

Let us turn to the extreme left or north side. The first eight figures are also the production of one whose skill was not equal to his task. The adjoining figures to the right of the Latin Fathers are those of 'the sibyls.' It seems that the wise and good of the early Church thought that among

the heathen nations of antiquity there had been some few raised up to be prophets of the future Church of Christ. These 'prophetesses' were especially appointed to foretell the great mysteries of the Christian Faith. In the annals of the old historians at Rome there were strange stories, which the Christians thought were thus best explained, and the few sayings of the sibyls that have come down to us read like prophecies. True or not, it was a kindly view to take, that the better and nobler spirits of the great nations of antiquity had a part in the preparation of the world for the reception of the faith of Christ. It was only in the sixteenth century that the artists adopted figures of the sibyls as appropriate to their churches, and they painted them with attributes, or symbols, referring to the Birth and Passion of our Lord. I believe there are more than twenty sibyls. On our screen there are undoubted drawings of only twelve. I give their names, and their probable explanation.

(1) *Cumana*, or the *Cymæan* sibyl. She holds a crib, or cradle, in her hand, a prediction of the Holy Nativity in the stable.

(2) *Erythræa*. The meaning of the name in Greek is 'red.' She holds in her right hand a red rose. She is usually painted, I believe, as carrying a white rose, in which case the white rose is supposed to denote 'purity,' and to foreshadow the annunciation of the Blessed Virgin. The red rose may well be the rose of pardon, the rose whose tints are a forecasting of the 'precious blood.'

(3) *Persica*. She has a lantern in her hand, a prediction of the Messiah—the Light to lighten the gentiles; or perhaps it may be an allusion to *S. John*, i. 4.

(4) *Europa*. She holds in her hand a naked sword, and is supposed to be the prophetess of divine vengeance. Others think that her sword denotes the murder of the Innocents.

(5) *Agrippina*. The scourge in her hand evidently points to our Lord's sufferings.

(6) *Tiburtia*. In her right hand she holds a 'hand.' This, like the preceding symbol, also denotes the sufferings of Christ, possibly alluding to *S. John*, xix. 3.

(7) I have failed to discover the name of this sibyl. Her symbols are a basin and ewer, the significance of which it is difficult to see. The reference is most probably to the wounded Body of our Lord, and to the washing it would need, and would assuredly receive from gentle, loving hands. It can hardly allude to the washing described in *S. John*, xiii. 5, for this allusion would disturb the sequence

and oneness of the idea, which clearly is the crucifixion-suffering, unless this panel has been misplaced.

(8) *Hellespontina.* She holds a cross. She is supposed to have foreseen the crucifixion.

(9) *Delphica.* Her 'symbols' are a crown of thorns and a spear. Alas! that the restorer's brush has been evidently over the crown of thorns. Still we can see without difficulty what is meant.

(10) Probably *Lybica.* The significance of the pincers and nails which she bears are unmistakeable.

(11) I am not sure of the name of this sibyl. It is probably *Cimeria.* She holds in her hands a horn. It is the horn of joy and triumph, announcing the completion of the mystery of the Passion.

(12) The last figure, *Phrygia* by name, carries a processional cross and banner. This denotes the resurrection and the victory of Christ.

About the year 40 B.C. Virgil wrote that most memorable account which he has given of a Virgin, and of the Child Who was to descend from heaven, to rule the whole world in peace with the goodness of His Father, blot out the sins of mankind, deliver the earth from constant fear, slay the serpent, and bring back the golden age. He says he derived this from the verses of the Cumæan Sibyl.[1]

The figure on the pedestal above the sibyls is S. James the Apostle, the patron saint of Spain. He is also the patron saint of travellers. The scallop shell in his hat denotes this. Scallops occur in abundance on the coast of Palestine, and were formerly worn by pilgrims as a token that they had been in the Holy Land. His right hand grasps the palmer's staff. In his left arm he bears a roll, *i.e.* a book, over which there is thrown a golden veil, a veil woven of golden threads.

It is uncertain whom the figure on the pedestal on the south side represents. As far as I can ascertain, these two figures do not belong to the original screen, but were additions to it, brought from a monastery in the Levant.

[1] *Eclogue*, IV.

Turning to the parclose screen under the tower we find that the subjects of the twelve panels counting from left to right are:—

> (1) Unknown (? *S. Bridget*), (2) *S. Christopher*, *i.e.* the Christ-bearer, (3) Probably *S. Michael*, (4) Probably *S. Ægidius*, (5) and (6), *S. Francis* of Assisi, and the story of the Stigmata, (7) *S. Michael* and the Dragon, (8) *S. George* and the Dragon, (9) *S. Gabriel* with a trumpet, (10) An abbess, (11) *S. Sebastian*, (12) A Bishop.

The great screen was surmounted, as was usual, by a rood, that is to say, a figure of our Lord on the cross between the Virgin and S. John. These remained for a century after the reformation. When they were removed under the drastic destruction of puritan times, the tenons were cut off, and they may be seen in the mortices to this day.

On the back of the screen was painted in 1528 an inscription from the Latin version of the Psalms:—

> "Beati qui ambulant in viis ejus[1]
> Cantate Domino Canticum novum.
> Laus ejus in Ecclesia Sanctorum[2]
> Laudate nomen ejus in choro in
> Tympano et Psalterio[3]
> Laudate Deum in sono tubæ
> Laudate eum in Cimbalis bene sonantibus
> Laudate eum in Cimbalis jubilationis
> Omnis spiritus laudet Dominum[4] Amen.
> A.D. 1528."

This is translated in the Prayer Book version thus:—

> "Blessed . . . are they who walk in his ways."[5]
> "O sing unto the LORD a new song:
> Let the congregation of saints praise him."[6]
> "Let them praise his name in the dance:
> . . . With tabret and harp."[7]
> "Praise him upon the well-tuned cymbals:
> Praise him upon the loud cymbals.
> Let everything that hath breath:
> Praise the LORD."[8]

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[1] *Ps.* cxxvii. 1. [2] *Ps.* cxlix. 1. [3] *Ib.* 3. [4] *Ps.* cl. 3, 5.
[5] *Ps.* cxxviii. 1. [6] *Ps.* cxlix. 1. [7] *Ib.* 3. [8] *Ps.* cl. 5, 6.

In giving his testimony to the extreme beauty of our 'gorgeous screen,' as he calls it, Oliver says[1] that its exquisite work was "insulted by the vilest head-piece that could have been invented, in the year 1620." This 'head-piece,' affixed by the Heralds' College, consisted of "the Royal Arms, those of Prince Charles, and the Bishop of Exeter, and the Acland, Sainthill, and other neighbouring families of consequence." What remains of this, under the name of 'the Lion and the Unicorn,' was removed to the guildhall at the restoration of 1842. There was something very characteristic of the old clerk's reverence for all that belonged to the church in Brimicombe's account of this. "'Twer th' prupperty o' th' chutch, e knaw. An' tha shudden a took'd it. *But 'tes better wer 'tis.*" And he was right.

In 1839 the screen narrowly escaped destruction. On the 16th of September a committee was appointed "to consider a better appropriation of the sittings in the church." On the 29th of November, 1839, the committee reported, "that they could not discover any means by which a satisfactory new arrangement or appropriation of the church sittings could be made." But they recommended

> "That the following applicants for additional church accommodation, *viz.*: Mr. Henry Sparks Bowden, Miss Jane Sainthill Pearse, Mr. John Dewdney, and Mr. Robert Dewdney be permitted by the parish to erect at their own expense Pews in the Rood Loft in the Church, and that the said Rood Loft should first be securely propped by means of iron pillars at the expense of the parish."

Thereupon Mr. Charles Matthews, Mr. Anthony Martyn, Mr. Joseph Ham, and Mr. Henry Drew applied for like permission, and on the 12th December,

> "it was unanimously agreed, Henry Bowden, Chairman, that permission be granted to the 8 persons named to

[1] *Eccles. Antiq.*, p. 16.

> erect Pews or seats in the Rood Loft, but that the pews when erected shall severally be held by them either personally, or attached to messuages, as the said several persons shall hereafter decide."

But happily for the reputation of the parish, it was found very inconvenient to erect seats in the 'Rood Loft.' In fact the structure would not bear their load. Accordingly, on the 20th February, 1840,

> "it was resolved that the sittings in the north end of the gallery at present occupied by the school children be appropriated to the applicants 'on condition of their paying the expense of fitting up the same, and altering the seats under the singers' Loft to accommodate the charity children.'"

This proposition proving unacceptable, it was further proposed, 1st February, 1841, in order to give suitable dignity to the important seats required, that the great screen should be moved from the eastern end of the church, and erected in front of the western gallery. Just at this juncture it was discovered that a considerable sum of money must be laid out on necessary repairs. Financial discretion stepped in, and our screen was spared.

The Seating of the Church

Up to the time of the fifteenth century church, when the screen was erected, there were probably no fixed seats in the building, nothing approaching to the appropriation of any particular spot in the church to one man's exclusive use. We have still some fragments of oak work of that date in the present priests' desks, and in a small bench in the vestry. Pews, *i.e.* "enclosed seats, enabling people to attend church and hear sermons comfortably and luxuriously, were not known till long after the reformation, and were not in general use before the middle of the seventeenth century."[1] But

[1] See Hook, *Church Dict.*

by the eighteenth century there had grown up the practice of appropriation which in these days we so rightly deprecate. It grew out of, and was part of, the general decay of religion which oppressed the nation during that period of barren controversies and unpractical speculations which succeeded the vigorous age of the great Caroline divines. We have painful, stinging references to this dreary, disappointing time, when a dead level of uniform dulness spread alike over the church and dissent, in Hogarth's picture of 'The Sleeping Congregation' in their huge box pews; and in the frequent mention in the *Spectator* of the common irreverence of all classes of people in church. Their comfort and their rights were more to men than their duty and the honour they owed to God. And the business-like terms of a faculty for a family pew in 1759 represent very fairly the spirit in which they went to worship:—

Faculties *Dio. Reg.*, No. 1, p. 134, 12th day of March 1759

Licence for a seat in Bradninch to William Moore and John Gervis the younger.

They supplicate "leave and licence for erecting a seat in a vacant plot of ground in the middle Isle of the Parish Church of Bradninch aforesaid at the Eastern End thereof before ye Seat wherein the Aldermen sit to contain in length from East to West six Feet and Six Inches, or thereabout, and in breadth from North to South Four Feet Seven Inches or thereabout; . . . as long as the said W. Moore, and his family shall be owners and Possessors of an Estate in the said Parish called Tywnhaus, and as long as the sd John Gervis and his family shall be owners of an Estate called 'Late Popes' and shall be members of the Church of England"

At this time there was in the church a western gallery, approached by two staircases along the south and north walls. It blocked up the west window, and entirely hid the dignity of the tower arch.

In 1770 the seats were "from length of time gone greatly to decay," and a license was granted for new

seating the church, and there is a faculty dated 1st August, 1775, which confirms the "appointment or disposition of the new seats or pews."

The grand-daughter of the Hon. Levison Keith-Murray, the builder of Dunmore, looked in vain in 1909 for "the little gallery pew, quite by itself, which he had erected for himself. It was square, and overlooked the pulpit, and it had a staircase, and a curtain at the bottom of the stairs." It was Mrs. Godfrey Jones' "first recollection of going to church," and in the hidden depths of the 'private pew' she was given a picture book to keep her quiet.

On the 30th of July, 1842, another faculty was granted by bishop Philpotts, confirming the allotment of pews and seats which "had recently been erected upon an improved plan, and with a view to more general accommodation."

The parishioners received assistance from the Metropolitan Church Building Society, upon the condition that one-third of the new sittings should be free sittings.

One third of the sittings were accordingly

> "allotted and appropriated as and for free sittings for the general use and accommodation of the parishioners."

The other two thirds were

> "allotted and appropriated to the several parishioners . . . for their exclusive use and accommodation . . . so long as they should severally continue inhabitants of the said parish of Bradninch, payers to the parochial rates of the said parish, and members of the church of England, provided that this our faculty be not taken to give or confirm to any or either of the said parishioners to whom seats or sittings are herein allotted and assigned any more than a possessary right, subject at all times to the disposition of the ordinary and of the churchwardens, acting as his officers, and under his control."

This proviso was inserted because no faculty could over-ride the right of each parishioner under the

common law to a seat in his parish church, which it is the duty of the churchwardens to provide for him.

The schedule of allotments annexed to the faculty sets out in parallel columns the number of the pew, the name of the messuage, the name of the owner, the name of the occupier, and the number of sittings. S. John Baptist's chapel, where the organ now stands, was divided into two square pews appropriated to the rectory house. The rest of the space to the east of the screen was filled with seats arranged, as at present, looking north and south. But there was no place for the clergy in the chancel. The pulpit, a modern hexagonal oak-painted deal structure, stood almost where the present pulpit stands, surrounded by a square pew allotted to the vicarage. On the southern side, to the west of the column corresponding to that to which the present pulpit is attached, was a 'two-decker,' consisting of the priest's desk, and under it the clerk's desk, both looking north. The space between this and the screen was filled by two pews facing west, which were appropriated to the mayor and corporation.

There are now no seats in the church held either by prescription or faculty. They have been all free since the re-arrangement of the seating in 1889.

Ornaments of the Church

The first knowledge that we have of the 'ornaments' in possession of the parish church is supplied to us by a document in the public record office of the 3rd of March, 1552/3.[1]

Pochia de Bradnynch

"One sense[2] of sylvr specified in the last Inventory which was stolen by one unknowen from the possession of one Robert Mill for the which sense by the ordynance of the seyd Comiss he hath paid to the Kyngs maties use £ iij*s.* iiij*d.* . . . . . iiij bells withe one little bell in the towre and one chalys."

[1] *Exchequer Q. R. Church Goods.* ⅜

[2] *I.e.*, censer.

'The little bell in the towre' hung, probably, in a small belfry in Walter de Cornubia's chapel. The other four bells were hung in a strong oaken frame in the great tower. In 1748 these four were recast, and two were added to the number. The tenor bell bears the inscription :—

> "Mr. Philip Moore and Mr. Peter Mullens churchwardens 1748. T. Bilbie cast us all." [1]

Canon Ellacombe says they are "a fine peal and good bells." The timber of the old frame, which was certainly two hundred years old, and no one knows how much older, was worked into the enlarged cage for the six bells.

In 1761 a clock, with a wooden lozenge-shaped dial, ringing chimes on these bells, was put into the tower. On it is the inscription :—

"Chas. Richards
Anthy. Martiun
WARDINGS.
John Pyke
Wiveliscombe, 1761."

Before a hundred years had elapsed the clock had ceased to chime, and Mr. John Morgan, who was mayor in 1777 and again in 1779, declared his intention to restore the chimes. But he died very unexpectedly before he could carry out his wishes. He was buried on the 26th of January, 1781.

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[1] "Bilbie, who is known as a founder throughout the kingdom, we may claim as a resident at Cullompton, where from 1715 to 1815 the family set up in our county 352 bells. They had also a foundry at Chewstock in Somerset, whence Thomas Bilbie, who was a freeman of Bristol, migrated, and set up at Cullompton the West of England Church Bell Foundry which flourished there until the death of his only son, Thomas Castleman Bilbie, in 1813, aged fifty four." *The Church Bells of Devon*; H. T. ELLACOMBE, 1872, p. 98.

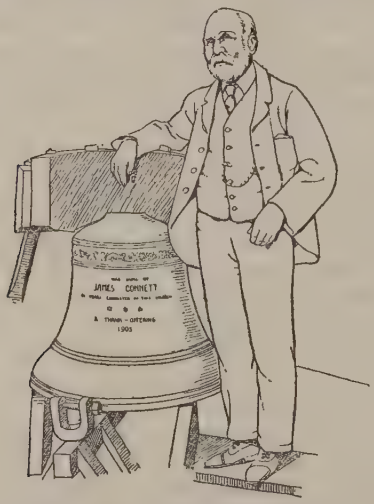
Later on Mr. Henry Matthews set his heart on presenting a chiming clock, and completing the octave. Shortly before his death he directed Brimicombe, the clerk, who was also a watchmaker, to write to a London firm, and put the matter in hand. Brimicombe's own quaint words were :—"One day Mr. Matthews he says to oi ; 'I've got a letter fra Lunnun, an ther ain't no reum fur tew more bells,' says 'e. So I says 'Ther be reum for tew more up over, wher the rames of th' old chimes be.' An 'e jumped at me, an 'e says, 'Why for didn yew tell me thickey ther afore'? says 'e." Mr. Matthews' death put an end to this scheme also, and nothing further was done.

After the removal of the ringing loft behind the organ in 1880, the ringers were sent up to the floor above the west window. But Mr. Strong felt that it would tend to better decency and order if they rang from the ground floor. He interested Dr. Stephenson —a keen campanologist—in the matter, and the desired re-arrangement was completed in 1887. The first peal was rung on Queen Victoria's Jubilee Day in that year.[1]

One day in 1901, John Heal, the captain of our ringers, disconcerted me not a little by announcing that the old bell-frame was giving trouble. I had it inspected by two experts, who declared it was worn out, and that it was no longer safe to ring the bells. The only remedy was a new cage. The reverend Maitland Kelly, secretary to the Devon Guild of Ringers, had told us that our 'ring' was so exceptionally good that we ought to make an effort to complete the octave. And indeed it appears that it had been the original intention that the ring should consist of eight bells. In a table giving the number of bells in the several churches of the diocese, eight are actually attributed to Bradninch. We had not much hope of making this

[1] While a muffled peal was being rung at the queen's funeral the clapper of the tenor bell fell out. Happily it hurt no one.

great addition ourselves. But it seemed right to provide eight pits in the new frame in the hope that some day they might be filled. The work was, however, scarcely finished when Mr. James Connett, a townsman, offered to present the treble bell. We thankfully accepted his gift. And a few weeks later, another neighbour, Mr. Scholfield of Strathculm, gave



The Donor of the Treble Bell

the second treble, and the ring was complete. The new bells bear the following inscription. On the treble is:—

> "I was hung by James Connett, 40 years chorister in this Church. A thank-offering, 1903."

And that on No. 2 is:—

> "In Piam Memoriam, M. C. S., 1903."

And round the crown of the bell:—

> Dolentibus Doleo: Gaudentibus Gaudeo.
>
> (For those who mourn I mourn: for those who rejoice I rejoice.)

A chiming apparatus was added at the same time. Pyke's clock had long ceased to be efficient, and was sentenced to be thrown on the scrap heap, while an excellent clock, with a copper dial, which we were fortunate enough to secure from S. David's, Exeter, took its place. But this admirable time-keeper would not chime, so it gave me, as a lover of all that is old and good, great pleasure to rescue from the discarded mechanism such part as was suitable, and to have it adapted for striking the quarters—a useful office which it may well fulfil for many years to come. The cost of the whole of the addition and repairs was a little over £500.

It is satisfactory to be able to end this account by stating that the Bradninch bells are now endowed. Mr. Connett signalized his seventieth birthday by transferring £111 14s. 8d. Devon County three per cent. redeemable stock to the official trustees of charitable funds to pay the dividend, £3 7s., to the vicar and churchwardens for the time being for their upkeep. And as I write, the representatives of the late Henry Matthews, who, by his will left a cottage and garden on Cullompton Hill to maintain the chimes then being or thereafter to be in the tower, have signified their intention of giving effect to the testator's wishes by handing over to the vicar and churchwardens the value of this property.

I have not been able to trace the 'one chalys' mentioned in the certificate of the 3rd of March, 1552/3.[1]

Church Plate

The next reference to church plate which I find is in a terrier of 1727[2] which mentions two silver chalices with silver covers, a silver salver and censer, and two pewter flagons. These appear to have been lost. For in 1760 new plate was presented to the church by the Sainthill family. This in turn, together with a plated brass alms

[1] See above, p. 191. [2] In the Diocesan Registry.

dish of about the end of the 16th century, was stolen on the 2nd of February, 1866. The silver was never heard of again. But when the thieves discovered that the dish was only brazen, they threw it into the river at Waterstave. A flood cast it up on the meadows after many days, and it was restored to the church,—a happy accident, which the simpler minds of the middle ages would have called a miracle. It was replated in 1901.

The present communion plate, which consists of a flagon, a paten, and two chalices is the gift of parishioners. The inscriptions on the several pieces indicate the donors. There is on the flagon :—

> "Presented to Bradninch Church Anno Domini 1866 by Revd. H. P. Leakey, Incumbent, Wm. Hy. Besly, Churchwarden, H. S. Bowden, Charles Matthews."

On the paten :—

> "Presented by Dulcibella Linnington, to Bradninch Church, Anno Domini 1866."

And on each of the two chalices :—

> "Presented by Henry Matthews to Bradninch Church, Anno Domini 1866."

Other Gifts

I append a list, as complete as I can make it, of other offerings and gifts chronologically arranged :—

1847—THE CHURCHYARD CROSS was restored, as an offering from Henry Matthews, mayor.

cir. 1850—The EAST WINDOW OF THE SOUTH AISLE was the gift of Miss Sarah Yeatman,[1] in memory of her

[1] This window was placed in the church by Sarah Yeatman, the daughter of John Charleton Yeatman, of Frome Selwood, in county of Somerset, a scion of the Dorset family of Yeatman, physician to his royal highness the duke of Gloucester, who married Sarah,

father, John Charleton Yeatman, and her mother, Sarah Yeatman.

Inscription :—
"*In Piam memoriam I. C. Y. et S. Y. uxoris ejus.*"

1853—THE SCREEN was restored, as an offering from Henry Matthews, mayor.

1858—"TWO CHAIRS[1] made by James Westcott of this town from the pattern of the abbot's chair formerly in Glastonbury abbey," were presented as an offering from Henry Matthews, mayor.

1869—THE NORTH WINDOW in the chancel was offered, as a memorial to his brother, by Henry Matthews, mayor.

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daughter of the reverend Thomas Tanner, vicar of this parish, on the 29th day of May, 1821, and afterwards came to live here at Waterstave. Miss Yeatman appears to have been a very gifted and resourceful but somewhat eccentric young lady. She is remembered as fording the Culm in time of flood on stilts, The window, which is the first coloured glass in the church of which I have found any record, was not only her gift, but her work. And, though full of faults, it is a remarkable production for a girl of that period. It is said that, when she took the glass to Drake of Exeter to have it burned, he ventured to suggest that the drawing of the faces might be improved. But she refused to alter them, naively saying she was sure they would come out quite right, when they had passed through his furnace. She died quite young. She had a brother, John Charleton Tanner Yeatman, who died at Bradninch vicarage, at the early age of eighteen, and was buried on the 20th of March, 1840.

[1] These chairs were made of the timber of a famous old walnut tree at 'Dukes,' Mr. Matthews' residence. They were borne in procession from Hele station along with the Russian gun, and solemnly offered in the church. Mr. Strong, finding them too large for use in the sanctuary, placed them outside it in the chancel, where they remained for some time. At the request of members of the Matthews family they were afterwards given, one to the church at Knowstone, the other to the church at Stoke Rivers, where they now are.

Inscription :—

"To the glory of God in memory of William Matthews, who died 8th November, 1869, aged 79."

1872—The work of filling NINE WINDOWS of the nave with quarry glass, which had been going on for a number of years, was brought to a close.

The glass in these windows was given by members of the several families named in them. The work was done by Drake of Exeter. To begin with the N.W. window, which was the last to be filled :—At the top are the Cuming arms—Az. a chevron argt. between three garbs of the last. Below this 'C. C. died 1872'; and below, on scrolls borne by four angel figures, 'The memory of the just is blessed.' 'In Memory of Charles Cuming, Author of these Windows,' The inscription on the second window, under emblems of the crucifixion, is, 'Be doers of the word, and not hearers only'; on the third, 'Bring forth fruits meet for repentance'; on the fourth, 'The Lord alone shall be exalted'; on the fifth, under the monogram C. B., the arms of Sainthill—Or, on a chevron engrailed azure, between three leopards' heads gules, as many besants, each charged with a fleur de lis of the second; in chief, on a pile azure, three fleurs de lis of the first; and Pearse—gules, a bend embattled or, between two unicorns' heads erased of the last, and 'Arise, O Lord, save me O God.' In the south aisle, beginning from the east, the first window, under the monograms D. M. and S. M., has 'All flesh shall see the salvation of God'; and at the foot, 'In Mem. Danielis Middleton hujus Parochiæ generosi qui decessit A. D. 1836 et Saræ Uxoris ejus superstitis ad annum 1850.' In the next window, under the monogram E. K., 'I know that my Redeemer liveth,' and at the foot, 'Memoriæ Elizabethæ King hujusce Parochiæ Viduæ. Decessit A. D. MDCCCLIII.' To the E. of the porch, under a monogram, the arms of Bradninch and the Prince of Wales' plume, 'Keep my sabbath and reverence my Sanctuary'; and next the porch, under the arms of the see of Exeter—gu. a sword in pale ppr., hilt or, and two keys in saltire of the last, 'The Lord thy God thou shalt worship.'

1873—SOUTH WINDOW of chancel.

Inscription :—

"To the Glory of God & in affectionate remembrance of Charles Matthews died March 26th 1873 aged 66 years."

1874—EAST WINDOW.

Inscription :—

"To the Glory of God and in memory of Henry Matthews who died 27th March 1874, aged 81."

1880—THE PORCH.

Inscription :— ✠

"To the Glory of God and in memory of William Drew of Kensham, this Porch was erected by some of his friends A. D. 1876."[1]

1880—THE TOWER WINDOW was filled with stained glass at a cost of £250 in accordance with the will of Mr. Adolphus Henry Linnington.

Mr. Strong, to whom discretionary powers were given, employed Messrs. Hardman & Co., of Birmingham. The subject is 'The Last Judgment.' In the right centre light the Son of man on His judgment seat raises His right hand in act to bless, and with His left holds the world surmounted by the cross. Before Him in the left centre, doing homage, stands the archangel, S. Michael, in his right hand a spear, in his left a balance, symbol of the righteous distribution of reward and punishment. In the light on the right of the picture one angel is bestowing the crown of life on the faithful, while another angel on the left drives the unfaithful to their doom. Below are angels gathering the elect from the four winds, while the whole scene is encircled by clouds of glory. The smaller lights in the upper part of the tracery are filled with cherubim and seraphim. The inscription at the bottom runs :—'To the glory of God and in memory of A. H. Linnington, who died January 6th, 1880.'

cir. 1880—The WINDOW in the south wall east of the screen.

Inscription :—

"To the glory of God, and to the dear memory of Jane West, who died 14th April, A.D. 1854, this window is erected by her son, the Hon. George West, Member of Congress, U.S."

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[1] The funds for this memorial to a true worthy of Bradninch were collected in 1876, shortly after his death. But the porch was not erected till the faculty was obtained in 1880.

1886—THE LECTERN.

Inscription :—

"To the glory of God and in remembrance of Dulcibella Linnington, for many years an inhabitant of this Parish."

1888—THE SANCTUARY FLOOR.

Inscriptions :—

"To the glory of God and in pious memory of Jane Drew who died 4th July 1862, and of Mary Anna Matthews who died 18th November 1884. Grant them Lord eternal rest."

And—

"In the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. This Sanctuary Floor is dedicated to the Glory of God and in Pious Memory of Jane Drew who died, July 4th 1862 and of Mary Anna Matthews who died, Novr. 18th 1884.

R. I. P."

1889—THE PULPIT was an offering from the reverend Dudley Matthews and his sisters, Mrs. Potter and Mrs. John Matthews.

Inscription :— ✠

"To the glory of God and in memory of Charles Matthews, of this parish, who died A.D. 1873, and of Mary, his wife, who died A.D. 1888."

1889—THE SANCTUARY LAMPS were given by Miss Bowden.

Inscription :—

"Emma Birmingham, who departed this life Feb. 3rd, 1893. Given by Octavia J. Bowden in affectionate remembrance of her faithful friend and servant."

1893—THE RAIL IN THE SANCTUARY is a memorial offering.

Inscriptions :—

"In Memoriam Marian Drew, who died May vi. 1888."

And—

"In memoriam Mildred Annie Evans, who died May xviii. 1892."

Other gifts of which I have not ascertained the date are the ALTAR CROSS,

> Inscription :—
>
> "To the glory of God and in memory of my father and mother."

the CANDLESTICKS, and two STANDARD LAMPS.

Gifts made to the church since the bells and the chimes were dedicated in 1903 include the following, from different members of the congregation :—KNEELER and MATS for the sanctuary; brass PULPIT DESK; violet FRONTAL[1] and green FRONTAL[2] for the altar, with DOSSAL and HANGINGS; embroidered FINE LINEN CLOTHS for altar and credence, CHALICE-VEILS, BURSES, etc.; PRAYER BOOKS and HYMN BOOKS for the priests' desks; and a set of PSALTERS for the choir.

Some years ago Mr. James Connett placed an IRON HAND-RAIL in the belfry turret, and he has just given a STEEL FLAG-STAFF, with LIGHTNING-CONDUCTOR, for the tower.

The CHALICE and PATEN used in Hele chapel, the large BIBLE, and the HARMONIUM, were the gift of the vicar. The inscription on the chalice runs :—

> "This old Chalice from Ober-Ammergau, 1900, together with Paten, was presented to the vicar of Bradninch by Charles Croslegh, D.D."[3]

The font now in our church displaced in 1842 a white marble basin some ten or twelve inches in diameter

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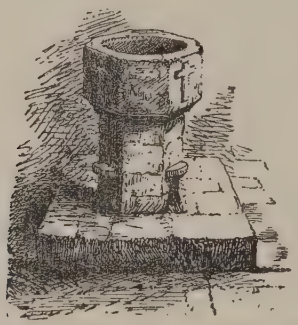
[1] This altar cloth is made of a fine piece of Eastern embroidery from Nâblous—the ancient Shechem. It was brought to England many years ago by the sheik of the Samaritans, Jacob esh Shellaby, and presented by him to the vicar.

[2] It is as well to record the fact that the ornaments on the green frontal are real amber, and are worth preserving after the cloth is gone.

[3] As the chapel at Hele is not consecrated, and is not the property of the church, I wish to put it on record that I have presented these things to the vicar of the parish for the time being, in order that they may not be hereafter taken away from him as were the vessels and harmonium formerly in use there.

standing on a mean black marble shaft, in the debased taste of the year 1770, when it was presented by the vicar, Mr. Manley. This had previously displaced a font of which I give a sketch, taken from a rough contemporary drawing in an old MS. book of the Sainthill family. It bears a striking resemblance to the shaft of a fourteenth century cross in the churchyard of Mawgan in Pyder, mentioned by Lysons.[1] He describes the chamfers as closed with the

The Fonts



same peculiar form which is shewn in the Sainthill drawing. Can we flatter ourselves that we know anything of an earlier font than this?

From time immemorial there was lying unused and neglected on the belfry floor an old stone, traditionally known for generations as 'the old font.' It is made of the local stone from which the church was built. It is quite unsymmetrical, indeed I might say amorphous. Not only is there no attempt at ornamentation, but externally it is quite unwrought, a mere basin, rough-hewn in the rudest way. Indeed, the old woman's description of it is very fair, 'It is just an ugly old stone.'

In 1841, Mr. Matthews, venerating the old relic, removed it to his own premises for safe keeping. As

[1] *Cornwall*, p. ccxlv.

years went by its identity was almost forgotten. But when his nephew sold the property in 1906, he restored it to the church. On the question as to whether it is the old font, experts differ. A gentleman who, I am told, is perhaps the best living authority on ancient fonts in Devon and Cornwall, having seen a photograph of the stone, as well as a full description with measurements, tells me that he considers it impossible even roughly to assign a date to it, and adds, "It is very rude, and of great antiquity; and doubtless it was treasured for that reason, and placed in the various churches built on the present site." Some experts maintain that it is not a font at all, but suggest that it may have been a stoup for holy water. If indeed it be a font, it is unquestionably a relic of almost unexampled antiquity and value. It seems impossible from the data before us to come to any definite conclusion as to what it really was. That it was venerated for its ancient connection with the church, and that, whether as font or stoup, it belongs to very early times, there can, I think, be no doubt. And we hope shortly to see it deposited once more in its old home, in a manner worthy its history and its old associations.

Chapels

The mother church—or, as it was sometimes called, the 'high church'—was not the only building set apart for divine worship in the mediæval parishes of England. Where estates were large, and there were outlying groups of population, it was common, from very early days, to supply the spiritual needs of the people by means of local chapels. Some of them added to the clerical strength of a town; some were grammar-schools, the chantry priest being the schoolmaster; others were chapels-of-ease for the convenience of those at a distance; while the greater number were domestic chapels attached to the castle or manor of the lord.[1] In Bradninch we had examples of them all.

[1] CUTT'S *Parish Priests*, pp. 110, 442.

At the eastern end of the south aisle was the chapel of sir Walter de Cornubia, knight, who on the 5th day of August, 1310, obtained a licence from bishop Stapeldon to have a chantry in it.[1] The carved panel now built into the wall near the chancel arch is probably from the altar of this chapel.

Chantries

"The fraternyte of Saynt John the Baptiste," or the guild of the cordwainers, also had a chantry in the parish church. It stood where the organ now is, shut off from the choir by a parclose screen. It was "founded[2] by dyverse persons To [find] a pryste to praye for the Sowles of the donors of the lands, and the brethren and benefactors in the parishe churche of Bradnynche. The yerelye value of the lands and possessions ix*li.* x*s.* v*d.*,"[3] equivalent to about £110 to-day.

When the brotherhood was confiscated under an act of parliament in 1546, the chantry certificates[4] tell us that the "ornamentes, jewelles, plate, goodes and catalles belonging or appertayning to the said brotherhood" were valued at thirteen shillings.

It is very probable that this foundation was made use of as a school, the chantry priest acting as schoolmaster. For it is a reasonable surmise that he had his residence in the little house known as 'College,' which, in keeping its ancient name, has preserved the memory of its original purpose, as the house where the chapel priests lived in community, and where they had a school for the children of the town. The last incumbent of the chantry of S. John, Master John Multer, was alive, and in receipt of a pension of £4 in 1553, *i.e.* when Thomas

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[1] *Epis. Reg.* 1307-1326, p. 299.

[2] There is nothing to shew the date of this foundation. The tracery of the upper part of its east window is in its main features very similar to a window in New College, Oxford, of the year 1386.

[3] *Certificates of Colleges and Chantries*, among the Records of the late Court of Augmentations in the Public Record Office.

[4] *Roll* 14, No. 15.

Byrkhede was rector of the parish.[1] In 1549 an act was passed,[2] confiscating to the crown "all Fraternities, Brotherhoods, and Guilds" within the realm, with all such goods and chattels as belonged to them. Despoiled of their property, and thus deprived of the services of their chantry priest and schoolmaster, the fraternity clung with jealous tenacity to such rights as were left to them. Men now living tell how the seats in the chapel were always exclusively reserved for the members of the guild. Some time before 1840, the impecunious cordwainers rented their chapel to the Pearses, who

Chapel of the Holy Trinity

converted it into a squire's pew, fitting it up, as Oliver says, "in very grotesque taste," and glazing the parclose. This did not last long. For the parclose, being removed to the tower in 1841, and the seats being allotted under faculty to the occupiers of houses, the cordwainers' interest in their chapel came to an end.

Chapels of Ease

There were two chapels of ease, one in the valley near Gingerland, which, from its dedication gave a name to the hamlet of Trinity; the other on high ground at Billingsmoor. The chapel of the Holy Trinity was licensed by bishop Stapeldon on the 20th June, 1381. It was built by the

[1] OLIVER, p. 16.

[2] 1 Ed. VI., cap. xiv.

piety of our fathers over a holy well, which, after it ceased to be venerated for its healing virtues, was highly valued to the last by the butter-making farmers of more utilitarian times for its unfailing supply of bubbling, limpid, and very cold water. Some of those who remember the well have always known it as 'the old baptizing well.' Whether in this we have a reminiscence of primitive British christianity, which always baptized in 'living,' *i.e.* in running water, I am unable to say. The well certainly met the requirement, for it was filled with 'living' water, the spring having a constant supply; and there was an outlet which kept the surface at all seasons, and in all conditions of weather at the same level. However this may have been, it was a place of such repute in the fourteenth century that the chapel was built over it.

The position of the well, its distance from the road, and the general lie of the ground evidently determined the very unusual orientation of the building, which in fact was a complete inversion of the ordinary rule, the chancel being west instead of east of the nave. The crypt, which extended the whole length of the chapel, was divided into two unequal chambers by the chancel arch. The well demanded the larger chamber, and the highway prevented the smaller one from being built to the east of it.

From the road six steps, each of eight inches—two of them outside the wall, two in its thickness, and two inside it—led down to the floor of the crypt. The roof of the crypt was a stone vault, springing from a string-course about four feet above the floor, and rising some three feet six inches. This vault was groined by two crossing arches, which ended in north and south windows, about three feet wide and eighteen inches high, just above the level of the ground. On the north side of the crypt, midway between the door and the well, was a low arch in the wall, about two feet six inches wide and two feet six inches high, around which much

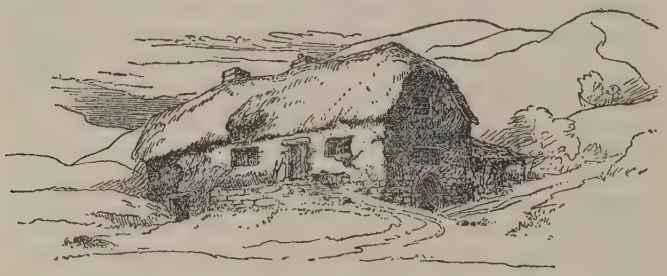
mystery hung. It was said to be the mouth of a subterranean passage leading no one knew whither. I presume it was provided as a precautionary emergency outlet for any possible flooding of the crypt.

The chapel seems not to have been in use for divine service after the middle of the sixteenth century, but it continued to be a place of pilgrimage to antiquaries up to the time of its destruction in 1876. Lying derelict, it supplied building materials to anyone who wanted them. The massive black oak rafters and purlins were taken to roof a farm-house built close by. The dressed stones of the belfry, of the windows, of the chancel arch, and of the vault under the chancel were gradually appropriated in like manner. But the crypt under the nave, with its portal and vaulting, escaped destruction on account of the service which they rendered in protecting the well.

Before long the gutted building, with parts of its thick walls still standing as high as the eaves, presented attractions to some adventurous squatters, who eked out what remained of the masonry with cob, and roofed the building in from end to end.

This was no unusual occurrence. Squatters had made good their title even in the reign of James I. For Norden in his survey says that encroachments had been made. They were not noticed in the parliamentary survey of 1650, but Simpson, 1788, reverts to these early encroachments, and recommends that steps be taken to prevent further loss of the prince's lands. The site of the chapel —church property—and a plot of land—duchy property —were in 1788 "claimed and enjoyed by Mr. Thomas Bishop (one of H.R.H.'s tenants) as his own freehold," and had come into the possession of Miss Grace Sellwood before 1824, in which year Mr. William Labdon, carpenter, rented from her the two dwellings which had been formed above the surviving crypt under the nave. They were entered by steps rising from a platform held up by a retaining wall three feet six inches high,

approached by an inclined plane from the Butterleigh road. A third dwelling, which was made out of the chancel and the crypt below it, was entered from the Bradninch road by a descending path as far as the threshold, and by two steps down to the floor inside. Mr. Labdon threw his two dwellings into one and greatly improved the habitation. His son, Mr. Edmond Labdon, who was born there in 1838, and lived there for eleven years, has given me such a detailed account of the building as it then was, that I have been able to draw a plan and elevations to scale. From these are taken the



Chapel of the Holy Trinity converted into Dwelling-houses

accompanying sketches, which represent the chapel in two very diverse stages of its chequered history.

In 1875 the farmer whose labourers occupied these dwellings applied to the lord of the manor to repair them. The architect of the duchy, deeming them to be quite unsuitable for human habitation, decided to erect three new cottages to take their place. The old chapel was demolished, and what remained of its original stonework was built into the cottages. Mr. Strong secured some fragments of the richly-moulded stones and placed them in the vicarage garden where they still remain, visibly crumbling away from year to year. Mr. Labdon tells me there was a stoup for holy water in the wall to the left as you entered the crypt. This no doubt met the fate of the rest of the stonework. But

the piscina was secured, and is now in use in the vestry of S. Disen's church, where it has been placed under a stone canopy bearing a silver plate with the inscription :—

"This Piscina
From the Chapel of the Holy Trinity
Which was first used for
Divine Service 20th June 1381
and was demolished in 1876
Is placed here in June 1907
CHARLES CROSLEGH Vicar
JOHN ROWELL, PETER WARREN } Churchwardens"

It is a matter of perpetual regret, that, when the duchy determined to build the new cottages, Mr. Leakey the vicar did not apply to the prince to have the old chapel preserved. For a place of worship is much needed in the hamlet of Trinity.

The chapel at Billingsmoor, dedicated to S. Whit, was a building about thirty feet long, and fifteen or sixteen feet broad, with a high pitched roof covered with thatch. It was altogether plainer than Trinity chapel, with oak roof, mullions, and door jambs, and its oak screen was still in position when it was ruthlessly demolished about 1875.[1]

An example of the domestic chapel, or oratory, was to be seen at the manor of Helc Payne.[2] A license was granted by bishop Stafford on the 22nd October, 1402, to Nicholas Hele and Alice his wife, to celebrate divine service in their private chapel at Hele Payne ; and on the 27th May, 1416, to the Fraunceys family for the same chapel.[3]

None of these chapels appear to have been used for

[1] A leather bag full of coins was found hidden in the thatch. The bag on being touched crumbled to pieces. Some of the coins were sent to the duchy office.

[2] Tradition suggested that some ecclesiastical windows might still be found. But I have been unable to trace them.

[3] *Ebis. Reg.*, 1395-1419, pp. 275, 276.

divine service after the reformation. In reply to the searching interrogatories of bishop Claggett, who held his primary visitation in 1744, the incumbent, the reverend Thomas Callice, who had been licensed to the cure in 1733, made answer :—

> "There are no chapels in the parish wherein Divine Service is perform'd. There are two standing, and kept covered wch belong to particular Estates."

The law carefully guarded the mother church against these chapels, usually inserting a clause in the license that the owners shall go to the parish church on sundays and other festivals, and shall pay all customary fees and offerings to the rector. The priests of the chapels were independent of the rector. But it is tolerably certain that by arrangement they undertook the services at the church during the frequent absences of the rectors.[1]

About 1855 Mr. Charles Robert Collins enlarged the school built at Hele by Mr. John Dewdney. The building was licensed by the bishop in 1865, and is still used for divine service.

It is interesting to enquire what provision was made for the upkeep of the church, and the maintenance of its services. No exact records tell us at what date, or under what circumstances, the parish of Bradninch was formed. "The parochial system, like other things in England, grew up gradually."[2] "About the year 800," says Selden, " . . . lay foundations were grown very common, and parochial limits also of the parishioners' devotions."[3] "Most laymen of fair estate desired the country residence of some chaplains that might be always ready for christian instruction among them, their families, and adjoining tenants." The churches

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[1] CUTTS, *Par. Pr.*, p. 121. [2] SELBORNE, *Defence*, p. 138.
[3] *Ib.*, *p.* 139.

which they built, "being hallowed by the bishops, were endowed with peculiar maintenance from the founders for the incumbents, that they should there only reside."[1] There is no reason to doubt that what occurred elsewhere, occurred also at Bradninch.

Endowment of Land

At the time or before the actual time when the parish was formed, the lord of the manor gave the site of the church with the adjoining consecrated ground for the service of God. And as, in those early days, no church might be built without a grant of land[2] for the support of the priest serving it, the lord of the manor provided "a suitable house and glebe to the satisfaction of the bishop for the perpetual use of the incumbent free from all secular services."[3] The house known as the parsonage or rectory, gave its name to the street called Parsonage Road to this day.

Endowment of Tithe

The lord of the manor also endowed the rectory with tithes. Familiar as everyone is with the payment of tithes, there are few things perhaps about which less is commonly known.

The institution of tithes is plainly traceable from the day when Abram "gave tithes of all" to "the priest of the most high God."[4] They consisted originally of one tenth of all property dedicated to God in the spirit of Jacob, "Of all that Thou shalt give me I will surely give the tenth unto Thee."[5] The principle was embodied in the law of Moses. And the witholding of tithes is represented by the prophet Malachi as robbing God.[6]

The first christians "had all things common."[7] As soon as the exceptional circumstances in which they passed their lives had come to an end, they adopted

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[1] SELBORNE, *Defence*, p. 140. [2] BLUNT, *Reform.*, p. 34.
[3] SELBORNE, p. 117. [4] *Gen.* xiv. 18, 20.
[5] *Gen.* xxviii. 22; *Lev.* xxvii; *Num.* xxiii. 21.
[6] *Mal.* iii. 8. [7] *Acts* iv. 32.

the system of a general offertory, administered by the bishop. Out of the common fund thus formed alms were provided for the poor, the expenses of divine service were defrayed, and the clergy were maintained. But as more settled times drew on, in the fourth century, the old system of providing funds began to take its place. The precedents of the Mosaic law were not binding upon christians: but they naturally suggested the tenth part, both to the clergy in their exhortations, and to the people in their practice, as a suitable measure for such gifts. The early simple principle that a tenth part of every man's income must be offered to God as His due became subject to a variety of modifications in practice. The most important change being, that, whereas all property was originally subject to tithe, its payment became restricted to such income as was derived from things which "yield a yearly increase by the act of God," such as grain, fruit, underwood.

The glebe land and the tithe were gifts of the lord of the manor, which means that he transferred to the rectory the whole of his own property in them. When he gave acres to the rectory they were no longer his own. And when he gave tithes, *i.e.* one tenth of his property in the produce of the land, to the rectory, there remained to him and his successors in title only nine tenths. No successor of the original donor ever came into possession of that which his predecessor had voluntarily given away.[1]

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[1] Tithes were first paid from a sense of religious obligation. Men felt that a tenth of all they possessed was due to God. This acknowleged obligation first acquired the force of custom, and afterwards the sanction of the Church's law, and then—to use the words of Mr. Gladstone's great Lord Chancellor Selborne—"passed with the rest of that law, into the national jurisprudence of our own and other christian countries. . . . When the State, according to the measure of the authority which church law from time to time acquired in particular countries, added a civil to the

In making these gifts it was the intention of the lord of the manor that the priest of the parish should have the proceeds of them for all time; and in fact he did have them, subject to the payment of certain imposts known as 'tenths' and 'first-fruits,' down to the dawn of the sixteenth century.

Value of the Benefice

'Tenths' were an annual tax upon the rateable value of all benefices. 'First-fruits' were one year's profit levied from all vacant benefices. In 1288 pope Nicholas IV. assigned the tax of the 'tenths' to Edward I. for six years. In order to ascertain what they amounted to, the king directed a new assessment to be made which is known as *Taxacio Nicholai*, and this continued to be the basis of all assessment upon the church down to the reformation. It gives the annual yield of the

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ecclesiastical sanction, this was in recognition and acknowledgement of the previously accepted customary obligation, and of the corresponding customary rights. It was not the creation, by way of tax, of a new burden; much less was it the grant of a new tithe, as out of any public fund or revenue. The tithe was never at any time a public fund or revenue. . . . If there were no other proof that this is the true account of tithes, and that they had not their origin in any secular enactment or grant, the mere fact, that suits for the 'subtraction,' or non-payment of tithes were, till very modern times, of ecclesiastical cognisance only, without any concurrent jurisdiction in temporal courts, might be enough for that purpose."

"As to tithes, whatever else may be doubtful, this is quite certain, that they never were the property of or payable to the state, either before or after their appropriation (or, in Mr. Selden's phrase, 'consecration') as endowments, to the particular ecclesiastical corporations which became entitled to them; and also, that they were never so appropriated, or 'consecrated' by any general public act of the state. They never entered into, and were never granted out of, the general public revenue, and never became part of it under any law, ecclesiastical or temporal, which recognised either the obligation to pay or the right to receive them. . . . From the time of the endowment of each parish church, the tithe-payer has rendered not a tenth of his own, but what was as much the tithe-owner's as the rest was his.' —SELBORNE, pp. 125, 126, 185.

endowment of Bradninch as "viii*l.* xiii*s.* iiij*d.*,"[1] out of which Arnold de Hollande, the first rector whose name has come down to us, paid 'xvij*s.* iiij*d.*' as 'tenths' to the pope.

In 1535, after the church of England had declared her independence of the usurped domination of Rome, the 'tenths' and 'first-fruits' were transferred by act of parliament from the pope to the king. The survey of ecclesiastical property that was made in connection with this act, is known as the *Valor Ecclesiasticus* of Henry VIII. The return for the diocese of Exeter under this survey shews that our endowment then yielded to Leonard Browne, the rector, the annual sum of £53, out of which he paid as tenths £5 6*s.* to the king.

The income of the rectorial endowments continued to be paid to the two next incumbents, Thomas Brerewood and Thomas Byrked. But then we fell upon evil times.

Rectorial Endowments Alienated

Henry VIII., being troubled in his conscience at the close of his life on account of his having taken the two great manors of Ivor and Damancourt from the college of Windsor, did by his will "charge his sonne King Edward VI. to geve recompense unto" them for these lands. In accordance with this will king Edward "did by indenture assure to the said College . . . the impropriacon of Bradninch in the county of Devon."[2] The practice of alienating lands and tithes from the rectories to which they had been given was an old widespread abuse in mediæval times, from which this parish had hitherto escaped. But now the king's act of restitution to the college of Windsor involved an injustice to Bradninch from which it has suffered ever since.

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[1] £1 at the close of the thirteenth century was equal to about £24 now.

[2] OLIVER, *Antiq.* II., p. 14.

The dean and canons of Windsor granted to Peter Sainthill in 1556 a lease of

> "The Rectory and parsonage of Bradninch and all manner of Tythes, Lands, tenements, woods and underwoods rents reversions services oblations Fruits chapel profits advantages commodities and other Hereditaments whatsoever they be unto the said Rectory and Parsonage belonging,"

charged with the payment of £40 a year to the licensed curate.[1]

To men who live in the twentieth century £40 a year —less than 15*s.* 5*d.* a week—seems to be a derisory income for a clergyman in charge of a parish like this. But in justice to the dean and canons it must be remembered that £40 at that time was equivalent to a sum considerably larger than the total combined stipends of the vicar and curate-assistant of the parish to-day. To have assigned to the curate-in-charge so large a proportion as £40 out of the £53—the sum at which the benefice was then rated—is to the credit of the college, which had it in its power to make a far less generous provision. But if, instead of a fixed £40 a year, forty fifty-thirds of the endowment had been secured to the incumbent, the diminution of the property of the church would have been comparatively trifling. If this had been done, the income of the benefice would have increased as the value of money fell.

Unfortunately the £40 provided was made a fixed charge on the rectorial property. Yet even so the £40 sufficed for more than two hundred years.

In 1769 Oliver Goldsmith in dedicating *The Deserted Village* to Sir Joshua Reynolds assured him that he had taken pains to form his opinions in accordance with facts ascertained in his country excursions extending

[1] In 1564 Mr. Sainthill estimated that after meeting a charge of £15 for dwelling for the curate, and £40 for his salary, he had a clear profit of £167 a year.—*A Cavalier's Notebook*, p. 4, reprinted from *Trans. Dev. Ass.*, 1889.

over three years. In his well-known portrait of the country parson he describes him as

> "Passing rich with forty pounds a year,"

and yet able to entertain in his 'modest mansion' the 'beggar,' the 'ruin'd spendthrift,' and 'the broken soldier.'

Forty pounds a year was the stipend paid to twenty-two successive incumbents of Bradninch. No house was theirs of right. And it is recorded that the lay impropriator took the Easter offerings to himself, though he sometimes allowed the curate to receive the surplice fees. As the value of money settled down to its present standard, the £40 became more and more insufficient. Since 1784 it has been augmented from time to time by private benefactions from churchmen, and by grants from Queen Anne's Bounty, and the Ecclesiastical Commissioners.

Queen Anne's Bounty

When speaking of these bodies, it is important to bear in mind the history of the funds which they administer. When the 'tenths' and 'firstfruits' were transferred from the pope to the king, the revenues were never applied to any national or public purpose. Burnet says that it "was not brought into the treasury." It had indeed been applied to the most unworthy uses, being "obtained by favourites for themselves and for their friends."[1] Queen Anne recognised that these moneys belonged to the church, and ought to be devoted to church purposes. She therefore restored them to the church in 1704, with a view to their being used for the augmentation of small livings. She "sent a message to Parliament, expressing her desire to grant to a corporation to be chartered for that purpose the 'first-fruits' and 'tenths,' then a part of the Royal Revenue; and Parliament willingly passed the necessary act." This corporation is known as Queen Anne's Bounty.[2]

After the report of a royal commission appointed in

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[1] SELBORNE, p. 161. [2] *Ib.*, p. 160.

1834 to enquire into ecclesiastical duties and revenues, the body known as the Ecclesiastical Commissioners was incorporated, and the episcopal and capitular estates generally were vested in them, with a view to their better and more economical management, and to the application of any ultimate surplus funds towards the augmentation of poor benefices. The endowments of the rectory of Bradninch were transferred to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners in 1866.[1]

Ecclesiastical Commission

The first augmentation of the vicar's income came in the form of an official residence. In 1784, Pyncombe's trustees made a grant to the benefice of £100. The governors of Queen Anne's Bounty met this with a grant of £200, and paid the £300 made up of these two sums to the incumbent and benefactor, the reverend Thomas Tanner, who conveyed to them for the benefice "a good modern-built House fit for the minister's residence, and a garden and orchard, in all about 3 acres[2] in the town of Bradninch of the value of £500." In 1810 Horner's trustees gave a benefaction of £200, which was met by a further grant from Queen Anne's Bounty of £300. In 1811 the same governors made a grant by lot of £600, and in the following year a second grant by lot of £400. The amount of these sums, £1,500, was paid in 1821 to the reverend Thomas Tanner, for a moiety of Potshayes, described as "a Farm House, Barn, Stable, Cowhouse and Hogstye, and 35*a.* 1*r.* 21*ps.* arable, meadow, Pasture and orchard lands enclosed in the parish of Cullompton.[3]

Modern Augmentations

[1] SELBORNE, p. 163.

[2] *I.e.* 'borough acres.' The borough acre was equal to three roods statute measure. To the land then conveyed an addition of 8¾ perches was made in 1868. And the whole is now given on the Ordnance Survey Map as containing 2.484.

[3] This land, for which no rent had been received for more than two years, was sold in 1908 for £900, which is held by the governors of Queen Anne's Bounty in trust for the benefice.

The house conveyed to Queen Anne's Bounty in 1785 with the three borough acres, as a vicarage, stood on the road side, between the present vicarage and the entrance gate. Although described at that time as "a good modern-built House, fit for the minister's residence," it was called by Mr. Tanner in 1833 "a small cottage." And in 1845 it was so dilapidated that it had to be taken down, when the vicar, Mr. Lott, erected the present house at a cost of about £700.

In 1833 the dean and canons of Windsor, having "determined and ascertained that the clear yearly value of the said curacy amounted to £101 10*s.* and no more," "granted and confirmed" by deed a further sum of £50 a year, part of the annual rent of £75 12*s.* 6*d.* then paid to them by Mrs. Elizabeth Margaret Pearse, the impropriator. This was met by a grant from Queen Anne's Bounty of £400.

In 1868, 8¾ perches—the present stable yard—which had been part of the Town Meadow, was purchased from the corporation of Bradninch at a cost of £36 10*s.* 6*d.*

In 1897 the vicarage was enlarged and altered by the vicar at a cost of £600, of which £100 was a grant from the trustees of dean Boyd's fund, and £200 a grant from the governors of Queen Anne's Bounty.

In 1898, a further benefaction of £100 from the vicar, as an augmentation of the endowment, was met by a grant of £100 from Boyd's Fund, and £200 from Queen Anne's Bounty.

The tithes of the parish were commuted by agreement confirmed on the 7th November, 1838, at the sum of £610, and the whole amount was awarded to the dean and canons of Windsor. In the year 1869 the commissioners effected an exchange with Mr. Anthony Martyn, who was at that time lessee of the Bradninch estate, whereby they parted with their interest in certain land, and £26 of tithe rent charge arising thereon, and came into possession of the remainder of the tithe rent charge.

In 1866, when the endowments of the rectory were transferred to the Ecclesiastical Commissioners, they assigned to the incumbent of the vicarage of Bradninch a stipend of £110 per annum in respect of the estates of the dean and chapter of Windsor. And by two instruments published in the *London Gazette* of the 20th May, 1881, they secured to him—"in respect of the local claim of the living upon the property in the parish formerly belonging to the dean and chapter of Windsor"—a further annual payment of £120 in augmentation of the living, and also an annual payment of £60 to be "paid only upon the production to the commissioners four times in each and every year, of a certificate under the hand of the bishop, that an assistant-curate duly licensed by such bishop, has been employed within the parish of Bradninch aforesaid during the quarter of the year then ended." And on the 9th June, 1910, they made a further grant to the incumbent and his successors of "one yearly sum or stipend of £15."[1]

The table of fees now in force in this parish was fixed by an instrument bearing date 24th June, 1886.

The chequered history of the endowments of the benefice bears striking witness to the continuity of the church of England from its first planting on the land to the present day. It shews how through all the changes of fortune that have passed upon her she has ever remained one and the same historic body from the beginning. It shews how baseless is the assumption that she cannot trace her genealogy higher than the days of Henry VIII., and that her being began with the reformation. Few events in the history of our land have been more persistently misrepresented than the great change known as the reformation of the sixteenth century. Lord Selborne says :—

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[1] *London Gazette*, 17th June, 1910.

> "there was not in England . . . some one act done at a definite time, called the Reformation. What is so called is the sum total of certain changes, which extended over many years."[1]

The object of the legislation in the reign of Henry VIII. was

> "nothing else than the exclusion of the papal power, and the establishment of the supremacy of the British crown, not over a new Church then created, but over the old then existing Church of England. Not one ecclesiastical corporation, except the monasteries—no archbishopric, no bishopric, no parochial rectory or vicarage—was dissolved. . . . Their endowments were held as before, by the old tenures and titles."[2]

Thus it has come to pass that the greater part of the present income of the vicar of Bradninch is derived from what remains of the gifts with which the lord of the manor endowed the rectory more than a thousand years ago.

To what end and purpose was all this effort put forth in buildings and endowments? What was their destined use? The end and purpose of it all was that the people might have a suitable building for the public worship of God, wherein they might be able "to assemble and meet together," in common "to render thanks for the great benefits that we have received at His hands; to set forth His most worthy praise; to hear His most holy word; and to ask those things which are requisite and necessary as well for the body as the soul"; and that they might enjoy for all time the regular services of a priest duly commissioned to minister to them the word and sacraments.

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[1] SELBORNE, p. 27. [2] *Ib.* pp. 27, 28.

All this was held in view, even from the beginning, in the services prescribed by the church. In pre-reformation times, the public services on Sunday were three—Matins, Mass at 9 a.m., and Evensong at 3 p.m. There is reason to believe that these sunday services—at least the two early services—"were attended with fair regularity by the majority of the people."[1] At Evensong, when the children were catechised, the number of grown-up people attending the service was probably not so large. There can be little doubt that on week days also Matins, 'Mass,' and Evensong were said daily throughout the year. These services were substantially the same as those we use every Sunday from the Book of Common Prayer. For the 'dark' and 'dumb' ceremonies of which complaint is made in the Preface to that book were not found chiefly in these offices. There is a prevalent notion that the office of the Holy Communion —which had come to be called by the unmeaning name of the 'Mass'—was "the most corrupt and idolatrous feature of all the Roman corruptions." But this was not so. For, to adopt the sober words of Dr. Cutts, "the Eucharistic Service of the mediæval English Church was very little altered in substance from that of the sixth century, and is so sound that it is inconsistent with some of the modern Roman corruptions in doctrine and practice."[2]

The Services used in the Church

These services were said in Latin down to the time of the reformation all over the continent, and in England, because Latin was then the most generally understood language in the world. But even in the earliest days the clergy were always instructed to teach the Creed, the Lord's Prayer, and the Ten Command-

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[1] Cutts, p. 20. See *Piers Plowman's Vision*, Whitaker's text, Part I., p. 104, and Part II., p. 529.

[2] *Ib.*, p. 200.

ments in the tongue of the people. In England, from before the Norman Conquest, it was the custom for the clergy to repeat the sense of the Gospel in English to the people after it had been read in Latin.[1] Even before the invention of printing, horn-books and prymers were written out by monks, giving in English the Creed, the Canticles, and many of the psalms and prayers, so that all these were familiar, even to the uneducated.

We have abundant evidence in the books which have come down to us to shew that great pains were taken to enable the intelligent to enter intelligently into the understanding of the Latin Service.[2] Bishop Quivil (1280-92) drew up a book of directions to his clergy on the subject of preaching. He required every parish to have a copy of this book under penalty of a fine. And from a mandate issued by bishop Brantingham (1370-95) we learn that it was the duty of the rector to preach to his people on sundays and holydays. So that we cannot look upon even the uneducated as worshipping wholly without understanding, although they had not the advantages which have been our happy lot for the last 300 years.

In 1542 it was ordered by Convocation that "after the *Te Deum* and *Magnificat* there should be read unto the people one chapter of the New Testament in English, without exposition, and when the New Testament was read over, then to begin with the Old." And in the new Prayer Book the definite teaching of the young was taken in hand through the Church Catechism, written in our mother tongue, brief, and admirably simple. "Elementary as it may be thought, no competent judge can examine it without seeing that its authors must have been mighty in those Scriptures whereof, indeed, it is the essence." It wrought so effectually that an authority ten years later, speaking of its effect, says, "Now, a young child of ten years old can tell more of

[1] See above, p. 21.

[2] Cutts, Chapter xvi.

his duty towards God and man than a man of their bringing up can do in sixty or eighty years."[1]

The principal changes in the services of the church will be mentioned in the notices of those rectors whose incumbencies embraced the period of the reformation.

I can find no reference at all to the music used in the services here earlier than a trifling note which occurs in the churchwardens' accounts a little more than 100 years ago.

"1807— 1st June, To 5 Niches of Reed . .	3*s.*	0*d.*
„ —22nd „ To ruled paper for Singers .	8*s.*	0*d.*
„ —22nd Oct. To Strings Reeds Candles etc. for use of Singers	13*s.*	2½*d.*
	1 4	2½d.

The sum of these entries, £1 4*s.* 2½*d.*, appears to have been the total charge for choir expenses for the year ending at Easter, 1807. In the following year it was £1 9*s.* 9*d.* In 1812 it was £1 16*s.* 0½*d.* In 1827 it had reached £2 8*s.* 8*d.* A few years later we find the significant entry :—

> "16th June 1832—At a Meeting of the Parishioners and Churchwardens held this Day it was resolved to give the Singers 30 shillings a year to find their own Claronete Reeds Bass Strings etc. etc."

The church orchestra which was disbanded at the coming of the organ was composed of

Violin, Joseph Denner
Violoncello, John Hitt, later John Dunn
1st Clarionet, Peter Warren
2nd Clarionet, John Warren
3rd Clarionet, Thomas Warren
—— William Hitt.

And the principal singers were, William Mortimore, John Smith, two Pulmans (father and son), Eliza Pitts

[1] BLUNT, *Ref.* p. 68.

(still alive), Sarah Pitts, Selena Dunn, Louisa Quick, Anne Webber, and Mary Dunsford.

On the 9th of July, 1840, the Vestry voted £300 for (among other things) "providing and fixing a hand-organ." And there apparently the matter rested for a time. For later on we find the entry :—

> "Sunday 19th Sept. 1841 at a Vestry held in the School-room to decide whether the organ which is about to be provided for the church shall be a finger- or a barrel-organ. Mr. H. Matthews proposed that a barrel-organ should be provided. This was seconded by Mr. Lott. Mr. Bonner proposed and Mr. Crossman seconded an amendment that a finger-organ should be had. It was decided by four votes to three 'a barrell-organ to be provided.'"

I am not quite clear, however, that a barrel-organ ever was provided. But an organ of some kind was placed in the gallery. For on the 24th of June 1852 it was

> "Resolved that the Churchwardens be authorized to remove the organ nearer to the tower arch,"

and also

> "that Mr. John Gray be requested to vacate the seat in the front of the organ in the gallery, and that the same be appointed to the use of the singers."

On the 8th December, 1864,

> "It was resolved that the removal of the organ would be no improvement, and that the churchwardens be requested to allow it to remain in its present position."

Its removal to the chancel is chronicled in the notice of Mr. Strong.

The first regular organist was John Dunn, who began to learn the instrument at the age of forty-two. He was succeeded in 1870 by his eldest son, Barzillai John Dunn, after whose death, in 1883, his younger brother,

our present organist, Edwin George Dunn, was appointed.

Mention must be made of other uses—certainly not devotional—to which the church was put. The occasion of the parishioners being assembled in large numbers in church was seized upon as an opportunity for publishing notices of various kinds, secular as well as religious. For instance, notice in church of the straying of horses was authorised by an Act of Parliament passed in the thirteenth year of Henry VIII., 1522. Briefs, too, were published. These were letters patent directing the collection of alms for special purposes named in them. They were granted for the building and repairing of churches, and also for benevolent purposes, such as the redemption of prisoners of war, and the making good losses by fire, inundation, or other accident.

Briefs

No regular record of briefs published in our church is extant. But in the registers are the two following entries :—

> "September the 24th 1659—Collected in ye high Church of Bradninch for and towards the repairing the loss sustained by fire in Soulbay in the county of Suffolk the some of one pound five shill and Three pence half penny by Tho: Pearce."

> "January 27th, 1660—Collected in the High Church of Bradninch towards the reparing the breech of the Sea in to the town of watchett in Somesit the som of *22s.* and *6d.* by henrie May and Robert Taylor Church wardens."

Briefs were commonly published here down to the beginning of the nineteenth century. The last mention of them that I have met with is an entry in the churchwardens' book in the year 1813 :—

> "To Parator sundry times with Form of Prayers, Notice of Visitation, Briefs, and Postage of letters—17*s.* 0*d.*"

The study of briefs as furnishing important historical evidence is very interesting. Different registers throughout the country bear witness to the Bradninch fires of 1666 and 1683/4. At Pinhoe is an entry in the churchwardens' book :—

> "June 17th, 1666. Collected in the Parish of Pinhoe toward the relief of ye poor of Bradnidge, upon ye Town's being burnt £3 6*s.* 7*d.* Nic: Raynolds sen."[1]

At Woodbury :—

> "April 28th, 1668—Collected and paid to a Briefe for the losse by fire in Bradninch 13*s.* 4*d.*"[2]

At Huish :—

> "1668—Collected for Bradninch fire 10th May 1668 the sume of two shillings."

At Stanton S. John, Oxford :—"3*s.* 1*d.*"[3]

At Ile Abbots :—

> "*Anno Domini 1683. Collecta fuit in ecclesiâ pochali de Ile Abbotts in usum pochianorum de Bradninch in Comitatu Devon Summa unius Solidi et trium Denariorum.*"

At Holy Trinity, Exeter :—

> "April 24, 1684-5. Upon a Brief for the fire in Bradninch, June 1, 1684, 9*s.* 3*d.*"

At East Budleigh :—

> "1684, Collected for and towards the fier at Bradninch 3*s.* 4*d.* 00."

At Huish :—2*s.* 10*d.*

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[1] I am indebted to the vicar of Pinhoe, the reverend Oliver Puckridge, for this information.

[2] *Reliquary*, x., 10, quoted by Dr. BRUSHFIELD in *Transactions of the Devon Association*, Vol. XXVIII., p. 664.

[3] *Ib.*

At Frithelstock :—4*s*. 3½*d*.

At S. Mary, Reading:—16*s*. 3½*d*.

At Mere, Wilts :—

> "Collected ye 27th of January for ye Burrough of Bradninch in ye county of Devon ye sum 00.05.07½." [1]

Another entry referring to this parish, though not to either of these fires, has been sent to me by the reverend Clement Robert Chope from a book belonging to the parish of Combe Pyne, Axminster :—

> "1725. April 12th. Then collected upon ye petition for Bradnnich in ye County of Devon ye sum of one shilling and six pence. Thomas Upham, minister."

Great abuses in connection with briefs arose. Returns are extant from Michaelmas 1805-18,—a time when church life, and with it the sense of public probity, were at their lowest—which shew that, of £67,000 collected throughout England for churches and accidents, only £28,000 was forthcoming for the purposes for which the collections were made. Such flagrant corruption could not long continue to be tolerated, and by the Act of 9 George IV., 15th July, 1828, the system was abolished.[2]

List of Incumbents

The parochial and diocesan registers have preserved the names of the men who, in continuous succession, have ministered in this church since 1261. Extant records throw a good deal of light upon the lives of some of these men, and also serve to shew, what in country places is sometimes forgotten, that the history of each

[1] *Notes and Queries*, 7th Ser., XI., p. 465; *Report and Transactions Dev. Ass.*, 1896, Vol. XXVIII., p. 664.

[2] The greater part of the original briefs issued from 1754 to 1828 are preserved in the British Museum, to which they were presented in 1829, by J. S. Salt, Esq.

separate parish is only an integral part of the wider history of England. I append a list of the fifty-three incumbents.

ARNOLD DE HOLLAUNDE

1261-1308. Hen. III.; Edw. I.; Edw. II.

Master Arnold, described in several deeds as de Hollaunde, being already protonothary to Richard, king of the Romans, and since the 11th of July, 1259, dean of the collegiate church of S. Buryan, was instituted to the rectory of Bradninch, at Bradninch, by bishop Bronescombe, on the 10th of July, 1261, on the presentation of Richard, earl of Cornwall, and king of the Romans. The bishop again visited Bradninch on the 8th of August in the same year.[1]

Arnold found here a fine church, either just finished, or in process of building.

ELIAS DE SANCTO ALBANO

1308-10. Edw. II.

Master Elias de Sancto Albano, clerk, occurs as rector of Bradninch, 26th October, 1308, when he obtained a dispensation, sanctioning his non-residence for two years from last Michaelmas. From another entry, 27th March, 1309, we learn that he was a subdeacon, and that his leave of absence was renewed and extended. On the 23rd of September, 1310, it was further extended till the following Easter, that he might be free to attend upon the lady Margaret de Clare, countess of Cornwall, but so that after that date he should return to his own church, to keep personal residence there, as he was bound to do. The countess apparently could not spare him, and he resigned three days later, on the 26th of September, 1310. During his absence from the parish, the church seems to have been left in charge of Master

[1] *Epis. Reg.*, 1257-1307, pp. 118, 167, 296.

Philip de Pateneye, clerk, chaplain in S. Disen's church, who had been instituted to the rectory of Butterleigh, 11th July, 1278.[1] In the incumbency of Elias, on the 4th of April, 1310, bishop Stapeldon held an ordination in S. Disen's church.

The total number of those ordained on this occasion was one hundred and one. Their names are recorded in the diocesan register,[2] from which the following summary is taken :—

First Tonsure—			
Regular	1		
Secular	11		
	—		12
Acolites			22
Choristers—			
Of Exeter	5		
Regular	4		
	—		9
Subdeacons—			
Archdeaconry of Cornwall	7		
,, Totnes	3		
,, Exon	1		
,, Barnstaple	1		
Letters Dimissory from Bishop of Norwich	1		
Beneficed	2		
Regular	1		
	—		16
Deacons—			
Archdeaconry of Cornwall	2		
,, Totnes	5		
,, Exon	5		
,, Barnstaple	2		
Beneficed	5		
Regular	1		
	—		20
Forward			79

[1] *Epis. Reg.*, 1307-26, pp. 83, 193; and 1257-1307, p. 121.
[2] *Ib.*, pp. 469-71.

	Forward . .	79
PRIESTS—		
Archdeaconry of Exon . .	5	
,, Totnes . .	2	
,, Barnstaple .	4	
Exeter	2	
Letters Dimissory from Bishop of Lincoln	1	
Beneficed	5	
Regular	3	
	— . .	22
Total number ordained . . .		101

The record of this ordination enables us to institute a comparison between the beginning of the fourteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries, which presents a striking illustration of the ups and downs of church history.

In the fourteenth century list of those who received orders in our parish church we find the name of 'Gregory of Halberton' (Gregorius de Halbertone).[1] In the twentieth century 'Gregory of Halberton'[2] was dean rural of Cullompton deanery, in which the parish of Bradninch is situated. These facts suggested the following lines :—

Once, to Bradninch from Halberton Gregory came,
To receive for himself his own orders, and go.
Now, the man makes the journey each year, all the same :
But he comes *with* his orders, not *for* them, you know.

On the 6th of August, 1310, a licence was granted to sir Walter de Cornubia, knt., by bishop Stapeldon, to have a chantry in his chapel at Bradninch, within the limits of the parish church.[3]

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[1] He afterwards became vicar of Broadclyst.
[2] The reverend prebendary Edmund Ironside Gregory.
[3] *Epis. Reg.*, 1307-26, p. 299.

JOHN DE CARENTE

1311-13. Edw. II.

On the presentation of lady Margaret de Clare, countess of Cornwall, John de Carente succeeded Elias de Sancto Albano, being instituted (by proxy—Master Philip de Pateneye, clerk) 30th April, 1311. On the 23rd of May in the same year he obtained a dispensation of non-residence to enable him to study, but he was to take subdeacon's orders within the year.[1]

RICHARD DE CLARE

1313-18. Edw. II.

Master Richard de Clare was presented to the church of Bradenach 16th October, 1313.[2]

PHILIP LE NOREIS

1318-22. Edw. II.

On the presentation of sir Hugh Daudale, junior, Philip le Noreis, clerk, was instituted (by proxy—John Gentilcorps, clerk) on the 25th of April, 1318, and he was ordained subdeacon by bishop Stapeldon in the parish church of Faringdon, Winchester, on the 23rd of December in the same year. He was ordained deacon, on letters dimissory from bishop Stapeldon, by John de Sandale, bishop of Winchester; "place and date uncertain; probably Holy Saturday, 1319."[3]

The bishop visited the parish church on the 12th of March, 1322/3, in the presence of sir Roger de Boddeleghe, John Holonde, notary public, and a large number of the parishioners. Finding the roof in bad condition, he directed the parishioners to repair it before Michaelmas under a penalty of £10.

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[1] *Epis. Reg.*, 1307-26, pp. 83, 97, 311.
[2] *Pat. Rot.*, 7 Edw. II., pt. 1, m. 13.
[3] *Epis. Reg.*, 1307-26, pp. 193, 522, 540, 545.

PETER DE POLFORDE

1322-48. Edw. II.; Edw. III.

Peter de Polforde, Poliforde, or Pulford, clerk, was instituted at Exeter by Master Walter de Setone, official-principal, acting under a special commission, on the 18th of June, 1322. He obtained letters dimissory for the orders of an acolyte, 14th July, 1322. And, again on letters dimissory from bishop Stapeldon, he was ordained a subdeacon by Peter, bishop of Corbavia, in S. Elizabeth's chapel, near Winchester, on the 18th of December in the same year.[1] The register makes no mention of the patron. But a note found elsewhere throws light on the subject.

> "Peter de Poleford, Parson of the Church of Bradenache, who is about to travel beyond the seas, with the King, for the King's pleasure, and by the King's command, has royal letters of protection, with the clause, *We also will etc.*, which are to hold good up till the Festival of the Nativity of our Lord next ensueing.
>
> In the presence etc.
>
> Witness the King, at Langsdon, iiii. day Sept. 19 Edw. II. (4. l., 1325)."[2]

On the 20th September, 1328, more than six years after his institution, he received, on payment of a fine of forty shillings, a dispensation from the bishop granting him leave of absence for a year to study "at Oxford, or elsewhere within the realm of England." What happened at the close of the year's absence shews that sir Peter de Polforde was no mere divinity student at the university. For on the 28th of September, 1329, he received another dispensation, sanctioning his non-residence for another year, and permitting him to put John Prodhomme, vicar of Payehembury, in charge of his church in the meantime. This second dispensation was granted to him to enable him to render his account

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[1] *Epis. Reg.*, 1307-26, pp. 193, 541, 546.

[2] *Calend. Inquis. post mortem; Braneys Maner.*, p. 156.

in the treasury of the lord the king, to whom he was bound.[1]

In the year 1329 Walter Megre, of Tauton, humbly besought bishop Grandisson to provide him with a remedy for his troubles. He stated that he had taken to wife in the face of the Church one Helen of Bradenynche; and afterwards, being misled by a sort of wantonness of cruelty into the belief that the said Helen was dead, he married one Dionisia of Bradenynche while the said Helen was still alive. Thereupon on the 27th of July, 1329, the bishop wrote to Master John de Nortone, "official of his own peculiar jurisdiction," telling him that, as he had himself no knowledge of the facts, he was sending the same Walter to him, and directing him to minister speedy justice in the case.[2]

An incident occurred in 1332, which deserves mention, as shewing something of the conditions of life in the fourteenth century. It appears that one Reginald de Hele slew a man in the cemetery of the parish church. There is no record of the circumstances of the homicide. But by his own confession Reginald was guilty of violating the sanctity of the place by the shedding of blood. It was necessary that the offence should be purged, and the cemetery purified after the sacrilege. The then bishop of Exeter, John Grandisson, put the matter with great solemnity, and, it must be confessed, verbosity, into the hands of his "beloved sons, the deacon of Plymptre, and Master Robert [le Fiz Raulf] rector of the church of Rewe." He bade them in lengthy terms to admonish Reginald "according to the canon," and to inflict upon him certain fines which should be paid within a prescribed period on pain of threatened ecclesiastical censures.[3]

At this time the every-day dress of the clergy had become very extravagant, approaching often-times to a

[1] *Epis. Reg.*, 1327-30, p. 530. [2] *Ib.*, Grandisson, pt. I., p. 518.
[3] *Ib.*, 1331-60, pp. 633, 688.

military rather than a clerical pattern. They wore "garments of a light hue, as yellow, red, green, etc., with their shoes piked, their hair crisped, their girdles armed with silver, their shoes, spurs, bridles, etc., buckled with like metal, their apparel (for the most part) of silk, and richly furred, their caps laced and buttoned with gold."[1] In fact, their dress and outward appearance had become so laicized, that in 1342 bishop Grandisson, acting apparently in common with his brother prelates,[2] addressed his archdeacons on the subject. He pointed out to them that the clergy ought to recommend their profession by their dress and gait, lest haply by an unbecoming carriage they might scandalize the eyes of beholders, to whom they should be a mirror and example. He reminded them of the reformatory decrees of cardinal Ottobonus, who, among other instructions, had directed that the clergy should wear garments which should not attract attention or cause a smile, either by an excessive length or an absurd shortness, but that they should reach to the ankle, or at least well below the knee. They should also wear their hair short, not hanging over the ears, and with a tonsure of approved size.[3]

THOMAS MADEFRAY

1348/9-75. Edw. III.

On the presentation of Edward, the Black Prince, Thomas Madefray was instituted 16th March, 1348/9. On letters dimissory from bishop Grandisson, he was ordained subdeacon by the bishop of Winchester in the chapel of Farnham castle, 28th March, 1349; deacon in the same place, 11th April, 1349; and priest in the church of S. Mary Magdalen Hospital, Sandown, Surrey,

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[1] HOLINSHED'S *Description of Britain*, p. 233.
[2] See CUTTS, p. 164.
[3] *Epis. Reg.*, 1331-60, pp. 959, 960.

6th June, 1349. He was also canon of the collegiate church of Glasney.[1]

JOHN SPALDING

1375-80. Edw. III.; Rich. II.

On the presentation of Edward, Prince of Wales, John Spalding was instituted 19th June, 1375. He exchanged, 12th May, 1380, with Henry Bernak, the next rector, for Bokesworth, in the diocese of Ely.[2]

HENRY BERNAK

1380-8. Rich. II.

King Richard II. being patron, Henry Bernak, exchanging with John Spalding, was presented 12th May, and instituted on the 23rd June, 1380.

This rector obtained authority from bishop Brantyngham on the 20th June, 1381, to have divine service performed in the chapel of the Holy Trinity[3] situated in his parish. He exchanged in 1388 with the next rector for Colstreworth, in the diocese of Lincoln.[4]

WILLIAM PYKESLEYGH

1388-92. Rich. II.

William Pykesleygh, rector of Colstreworth, in the diocese of Lincoln, exchanging with Henry Bernak, was instituted 23rd October, 1388, the patron being king Richard II. He exchanged in 1392 with John Bampton, the next rector, for Cornwood. And he exchanged Cornwood, 4th December, 1405, with Robert Offcote, for the vicarage of Queen Camel, in the diocese of Bath and Wells.[5]

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[1] *Epis. Reg.*, 1331-60, p. 1081.
[2] *Pat. Rot.*, 3 Rich. II., pt. 2, m. 17.
[3] See above, p. 205.
[4] OLIVER, *Antiq.*, II., 18.
[5] *Epis. Reg.*, 1395-1419, p. 159.

JOHN BAMPTON

1392-5. Rich. II.

John Bampton, *alias* Chapman, vicar of Cornwood, in the diocese of Exeter, exchanging with William Pykesleygh, was instituted 13th November, 1392, the patron being sir Philip Courtenay, knight. He exchanged (by his proxy, Thomas Randolf, 15th July, 1395) with John Wendovere, the next rector, for the archdeaconry of Lewes.[1]

JOHN WENDOVERE

1395-1421. Rich. II.; Hen. IV.; Hen. V.

John Wendovere, or Wyndover, archdeacon of Lewes, in the diocese of Chichester, exchanging (by his proxy, John Gardiner) with John Bampton, was instituted 15th July, 1395, the patron being sir Philip Courtenay, knight. The living was sequestrated on account of the rector's non-residence. The sequestration was taken off 2nd December, 1398. On the 8th of June, 1416, an ordination was held in the parish church by a suffragan bishop, who is called in the register Willelmus Salobriensis.[2] Wendovere afterwards so won the bishop's confidence that he appointed him penitentiary for the deanery of Plymptree for eleven years in succession, which shewed that he considered him a man of holiness and discretion. He died rector of Bradninch in 1421.

JOHN LANGTONE

1421-2. Hen. V.

Master John Langtone, 'Bachelor in Decrees,' was instituted, on the presentation of king Henry V., 18th of October, 1421. He resigned in the following year.[3]

JOHN BODEMAN

1422—. Hen. VI.; Hen. VII.

Sir John Bodeman was instituted on the 14th of December, 1422, on the presentation of king Henry VI.[4]

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[1] *Epis. Reg.*, 1395-1419, p. 149. [2] *Ib.*, pp. 149, 427, 367.
[3] EDMUND LACY, Vol. x., *Old Series*, fol. 31. [4] *Ib.*, fol. 54.

DAVID HOPTON

—1491. Hen. VII.

The institution of this rector is not recorded. But we learn from the register that it was on the death of master David Hopton that Robert Froste, the next rector, was presented.

Our dates and our history both fail us in these years between 1422 and 1491. But they were highly momentous years. In them our church took its present shape.[1] And when we look further afield we find that they gave birth to the art of printing, which laid the Bible open to common men, and made possible the diffusion of knowledge.

ROBERT FROSTE

1491/2—. Hen. VII.

Master Robert Froste, priest, was instituted by the bishop in his house "outside the Bars of the new Temple in the suburbs of London" on the 7th of February, 1491/2, on the presentation of "the Excellent Lady Margaret, Countess of Richmond and Derby, and mother of the most Illustrious and to-be-feared Prince, Henry VII."[2]

GEOFFRY ELYS

—1507. Hen. VII.

The institution of this rector is not recorded. But it was on his death that the next rector was presented.

RICHARD NORTON

1507-23/4. Hen. VII.; Hen. VIII.

Master Richard Norton, doctor of both laws, was instituted at Lichfield in September, 1507, on the collation of the bishop, '*jure sibi legitime devoluto.*' He

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[1] See above, p. 179.

[2] Richard Fox, Vol. xii., O. S., 2 pgn., fol. 123[b].

was collated to the archdeaconry of Barnstaple on the 3rd of August, 1508, and to the precentorship of Exeter cathedral on the 8th of January, 1511/12. He died on the 24th of February, 1523/4.[1]

The corbels of the dripstone of the south window in the chancel are demi-angels, each holding a shield. The one on the west impales, and the other quarters the official arms of the precentor of Exeter cathedral—Argent on a saltire azure a fleur de lis or—with the arms of Norton—Argent two pales sable, each charged with three crosses crosslet fitchée or. This is clear evidence that the wall was pierced to receive the Perpendicular window during the time in which Richard Norton was both rector of Bradninch and precentor of the cathedral.

JOHN TAYLOR

1524-33. Hen. VIII.

Master John Taylor, 'Juris Pontificii Doctor,' was instituted at Crediton, on the 19th of April, 1524, in the person of Master Robert Weston, canon of the cathedral church of Exeter, his proctor, on the presentation of king Henry VIII. He is described in the next record as 'the Venerable Man, Master John Taylor, Doctor of Decrees.' He resigned on the 4th of August, 1533.[2]

In his time the screen was coloured.

LEONARD BROWNE

1533-8. Hen. VIII.

Master Leonard Brown, priest, was instituted on the 21st of October, 1533, in the person of George Langlay, his proctor, on the presentation of 'Masters Richard Fermer, citizen of London, and merchant of Calis, and Robert Wylsford, citizen and merchant of the said city

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[1] Hugh Oldham, Vol. xiii., O. S., fol. 13.
[2] John Veysey, Vol. xiv., O. S., fol. 19b.

of London, patrons for that turn by virtue of a grant by king Henry VIII., the original patron.' He resigned in 1538.[1] From his having been appointed before the breach with Rome, and from his resigning at a time when the king was most openly asserting his independence of the pope, it seems probable that Browne was attached to the old order of things. And that these were passing away was plainly to be seen, when, in 1537, a copy of the first printed English Bible was ordered to be set up in every church.

THOMAS BRERWODE

1538-44. Hen. VIII.

The venerable man, Thomas Brerwode, or Brerwood, clerk, chaplain to the king, was instituted at Crediton, on the 13th of December, 1538, on the presentation of king Henry VIII. ['*in terris ecclesie Anglicane sub Christo capitis supremi*'], by reason of his earldom of Cornwall.

This said master Thomas Brerwode exhibited to the bishop certain dispensations, originally granted by Roman bishops, but admitted and confirmed by the king's authority, to hold at the same time six 'incompatible' benefices.[2]

He was also fellow of All Souls' College, Oxford, in 1511; B.C.L. 9th February, 1511-12; D.C.L. 9th April, 1527; canon of S. Paul's, London, 1518-24; canon of Exeter 1523; archdeacon of Barnstaple, 1528-42; prebendary of Endellion in Cornwall, 1533-42, and of Ridge in Crediton, 1536; rector S. Ewe, 1536, and of Ilfracombe, 1530-44, on the presentation of Henry VIII. He was also, on the same presentation, chancellor to the bishop of Exeter, and his vicar general.

A disastrous system of pluralities had gradually arisen from the alienation to the great religious houses of the parochial tithes, which had been gifts for the service of

[1] JOHN VEYSEY, Vol. XIV., O.S., fol. 69. [2] *Ib.*, fol. 95.

the parish churches. The sum left for the support of the vicar was often a miserable pittance of twenty or thirty shillings a year, with food, sometimes it was food only, with no money. Men of education would not accept such 'livings.' And, rather than ordain the lowest of the people who had neither education nor character, the bishops were often forced to adopt the system of pluralities, as the lesser of two evils.[1] It is therefore only fair not to judge of pluralities in all cases by modern standards. But it is difficult to find any excuse for Brerwode, whom Oliver aptly terms a cormorant.

Bradninch, I am inclined to think, saw little of this rector. He resided at Colyton, where he rebuilt the vicarage, which Oliver calls "an interesting specimen of domestic architecture." Leland had already spoken of it as a "fair house." Oliver tells us[2] that "over the porch appear the Arms of Bishop Veysey, between the Double Rose and Pomegranate. The initials T. B. are distinctly seen at the angle with the date MCCCCCXXIV. On the window runs the inscription :—'*Peditatio totum : meditatio totum*,' purporting, perhaps, that walking was everything in the way of exercise for the body, as meditation is for the mind. In a window of the Study of this *Peripatetic* philosopher, over the porch, was formerly a rebus—viz., a collection of *Briars* with the initials T. B., as also the arms of the bishop. These are now removed to the parlour below."

Brerewode's end was mysterious and dramatic. The bishop appointed him, as his vicar general, on a commission to put an end to the farming out of the archdeaconry of Cornwall. The layman who farmed it brought the commissioners before the court in London, 3rd February, 1543-8, under the statute of *Præmunire*, for doing what the bishop appointed them to do. They were condemned, and committed to prison. And in

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[1] BLUNT'S *Hist. Reform.*, p. 144. [2] *Antiq.*, II., p. 5.

prison, it is believed, Brerewode died, the date of his death being the 29th of May, 1544.

In 1538, when Brerewode came to Bradninch, the reformation was in its earliest stages. And in country places like this, it is probable that the people knew very little of the great upheaval that was so near. But in London, changes in church order, and in the public services of the church, were being rapidly made.

THOMAS BYRKHEDE

1544-55. Hen. VIII.; Edw. VI.; Mary

Thomas Byrkede, S.T.B., was instituted at Clyst, on the 16th of August, 1544, on the presentation of king Henry VIII.[1]

Byrkhede's tenure of the rectory was passed in more stirring times still. The most momentous change which he saw carried out was the production of the revised Prayer Book. For seven years a committee of the most honoured and learned ecclesiastics of the day worked at the examination, correction and reform of the old service books which had been in use up to that time. For these seven years they laboured at their task with wisdom and devotion, retaining all that was godly and scriptural, and discarding the superstitions, errors, and follies which later ages had added to the beautiful prayers and services of the early church. At last it was finished. The first Book of Common Prayer was published in 1549, and on Whitsunday of that year it was used in our church, and in all others in the realm, for the first time. And yet it was no new book. The prayers were the same which had been offered up in the days of Alfred, of Edgar, of William the Conqueror, the same indeed which had been prayed in the church of Christ from an immemorial antiquity. And it is this continuity, this changelessness in the midst of change,

[1] JOHN VEYSEY, XIV., O. S., fol. 113b.

nothing being altered but the language, which constitutes the strength and beauty of the service of the church of England. And she may be deemed happy and blessed that she has recovered much of the ancient simplicity of christian worship, while she has faithfully preserved the priceless treasures of its deeper teaching concerning the most sacred mysteries.[1]

In certain districts, the order to use the renovated Prayer Book stirred up a religious rebellion, and in the west of England especially, the zeal for the old forms, and angry revolt against changes which they misunderstood, and which appeared to them to be anti-religious, resulted in an uprising only to be stamped out in blood. We do not know whether Bradninch men joined the 'Devonshire rebels,' as they were called, or not. May it be, that the constitutional slowness of the people of the west to move off the old paths saved them from adopting the sudden bigotry of the puritan reformers, and thus, incidentally, saved also many of the treasures of the churches of the west from the destruction which ignorant fanaticism showered upon all that was fair and beautiful in religion? We seem to require some historical explanation of the escape from destruction of decorative work of such fragile delicacy as our glorious screens, in an age when, 'with axes and hammers they brake down all the carved work,' and covered with whitewash all that was glowing and brilliant in colour.

JOHN HOOPER
1555-61. Mary; Eliz.

JOHN GARRETT
1561-70. Eliz.

ROBERT PRAVIS
1570-9. Eliz.

JOHN FOSTER
1579-98. Eliz.

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[1] SPENCE, *Church of England*, pp. 175, 195, 204.

JOHN BURCHILL

1598-1603. Eliz.; Jas. I.

The following entry occurs in the parish register :—

"John Burchill, minister, and Wilmott Warren were married the xxith day of November, 1599."

John Burchill became vicar of Bovey Tracey in 1603.

WILLIAM ST. HILL

1603-*c.* 1616. Jas. I.

William St. Hill occurs as curate of Cove chapel, Tiverton, in 1622 ; probably the same man. There is in the diocesan registry a record of an official procession to register the bounds of the parish in the year 1613. Its very detail makes it interesting.

Bradninch pish 1613 "The Note of the bonds and limits of our pish, as we went in pression anno 1613.

The first day's procession
From Bradninch Church to Challwill.
From Challwill to Giles English his house.
From Giles English his house to Bradninch Cross.
From Bradninch Cross to Church againe.

The second days Jorney
From the Church to Barten Cross.
From Barten Cross alonge the Rugge way to Christ's Cross.
From Christ's Cross to Hills Geat.
From Hills Geate to St Whit's Chappell.
From St Whit's Chappell to Burnifords Cross.
From Burniford's Cross to Trinitie Chappell.
From Trinitie Chappell to Dandyes Cross.
From Dandyes Cross to Bradninch Church.

The 3d dayes Jorney
From the Church to Pinhill head.
From Pinhill head to Hooper's Geate.
From Hooper's Geate to Craneseys Geate.
From Cranshayes Geate to Cranshayes.
From Cranshayes to Turnwayes.
From Turnewayes to Mr Peter St Hills.
From Mr Peter St Hills house to Bradninch Church.
(τελος)

This is that wch we have ben Certified by the Ancientest men in our pish.

Jo Maior Curate.
Johannes Burton."

PETER BANKS

1616-22. Jas. I.

Peter Banks was instituted to Zeal Monachorum in 1629/30.

JOHN HEDMOND[1]

1622-4. Jas. I.

He died in 1624/5. Witness the following entry in the parish register :—

> "Sir John Hedmond, clearke, buried the xxth daie of ffebruarie, 1624/5."

JOHN DEAVES

1624-46. Chas. I.

In the diocesan register he appears as John Deaves, M.A., and the parish register has the following :—

> "John Deaves, clearke, and Johan Veysey, wid., married the xth daie of June, 1624."

He is probably to be identified with John Deve, rector of Michaelstowe.

JOHN PHARE

1646-62. Chas. I.; Chas. II.

Upon the devoted head of John Phare—"the son of a clergyman, a good scholar, and a man of good life"[2]—fell the weight of almost the whole period of the presbyterian domination. He saw the culmination of the terrible struggle between the crown and the parliament, between the church and presbyterianism; he saw the execution of the king; the fall of the monarchy; the ascendency of Oliver Cromwell, that man of strange anomalies, the mighty leader of men, the able statesman,

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[1] The name of John Hedmond was omitted from the list supplied to me, and in consequence does not appear in the list of incumbents on the chancel wall. The omission was due to an excusable misreading of certain ambiguous figures in the old diocesan MS.

[2] WALKER, *Sufferings of the Clergy*, Part ii., p. 24.

the victorious general, the puritan of puritans, whose religion was deep and earnest; but the man also who slew his king, who was guilty of such enormities of cruelty in Ireland as are still remembered there against us, and who trampled under foot the church of his country, practising a brutal violence towards her sacred things and her devoted ministers, and setting up the tyranny of an alien creed, foreign alike to the mind and to the traditions of the nation. When hope must have been nearly dead in the persecuted, poverty-stricken, and ejected rector, light broke out of the darkness. He saw the unlooked-for death of the great protector; the immediate collapse of his elaborate machinery of government; the restoration of the monarchy; and the lifting up again of the crushed church, for whose dear sake he had so cruelly suffered.

WALKER relates, in his account of the *Sufferings of the Clergy*,[1] in those harrowing times, the unsavoury story of the intrusion into the rectory of Bradninch of one of the ill-conditioned men who were officially commissioned to dispossess the holders of the benefices of the church. Before Phare came to Bradninch, he was curate assistant at Whimple, where "he was once pulled out of the pulpit" by a gentle objector to his doctrine. Together with his rector, the reverend William Cotton—"a person of a meek and humble temper, of a grave and sober conversation, of exemplary piety, charity and learning"—he was turned out by the indisputable authority of a troop of horse, which came to give institution to the intruding successor," and he was forced to fly for safety. We next hear of him as rector of Bradninch, where, together with the cure of the parish, he had "a considerable school." But he was deprived of both benefice and school, and turned out with his eight children to starve, because he refused to sign the 'covenant,' a disloyal and drastic document,

[1] Which see.

pledging its signatories to the destruction of all order in the church, and the abolition of episcopacy. A second time he fled into hiding to escape imprisonment.

Mr. Phare's office as rector was taken by one Chr. Lee, an independent, described as "no scholar, and little better than a crackbrained." Lee had been already intruded into the vicarage of Bovey Tracey, where he was in the habit of insulting and illusing Mr. Forbest, the extruded vicar, "who had the entire love and respect of the parishioners, though the other had the pulpit and the profits." Lee's manservant testified that he had "several times kept him from murthering his wife." Lee continually treated this man with violence, and "'twas verily thought that he once had a design to murder him also. But the fellow protected himself, and he returned the attempt with a hearty bastinado." When things had gone on in this way at Bovey Tracey for about a year, "the parish having endeavoured to make him as uneasy as they could," Lee came to Bradninch. Here he is said to have "treated Mr. Phare with all imaginable spight and malice." And Walker tells a story of a disgraceful assault made by him on that gentleman one sunday morning, which, if it be true, fully justified Oliver in describing him as "a man of brutal habits." He died suddenly on "the road between Bradninch and Exeter."[1]

After his death it would seem that John Longbridge was intruded into the benefice. For there is an entry in the register of burials for the parish of Plymtree :—

> "1655—John Longbridge, the parson of Bradninch, who died at the house of Mr. Abraham Webber the 10th of ffebruary."

After him there appears to have been a third intruder. For, subscribed to "The Resolutions of the First General

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[1] WALKER, Pt. ii., pp. 24, 421; OLIVER, *Eccl. Antiq.* in Devon, Vol. II., p. 21. See also *Dev. Ass.*, Vol. IX., pp. 271, 275.

Association of the Ministers of the County of Devon assembled at Exon, October 18th, 1655," we find the signature of "Thomas Wrayford, Mins., Rector of Bradninch."

Whether Mr. Phare was ever reinstated is not quite clear, but after some time he returned to Bradninch, where he seems to have survived till after the restoration. His eldest son, who, together with one of his brothers, became a tailor, was living in great poverty in Exeter in 1714. And from him Walker received a pathetic account of the pinching want in which the family managed to exist. Mr. Phare "preached now and then, where he could get a pulpit, and ten shillings, towards the support of his necessitous family. But his chief subsistance was on the charity of the neighbouring gentry." The children "were always very glad when their father could carry them to any gentleman's house, that they might fill their bellies." And the eldest boy "used to go with a bag to his back, and beg for the family, receiving from one a loaf, and from another a cheese." There were kindly hearts in Bradninch in those days, as there are now.

RICHARD STAFFORD

1664-70. **Chas. II.**

HENRY CLARKE

1670–4. **Chas. II.**

NICHOLAS REDWOOD

1674-7. **Chas. II.**

EDWARD HANCOCK

1677-*c.* 1682. **Chas. II.**

ROGER STOFFORD

c. 1682–7. **Chas. II.; Jas. II.**

The history of the quarter of a century which is represented by the incumbencies of Stafford, Clarke,

Redwood, Hancock and Stofford, is as impressive as that at which we have just glanced. Though we have no record to shew what public opinion in Bradninch was at the time, we have no reason to think that it differed from that which prevailed in the rest of the country. The triumph of the puritans had been marked by utter lack of sympathy with the traditions and life of the people. "The wonderful expressions of joy and deep content which welcomed the restoration of the church to its old place"[1] in the realm, shewed how deep a lodgment it possessed in the heart of the nation. But the deplorable policy of persecution followed by a parliament, and acquiesced in by a church, both smarting under the presbyterian tyranny of the commonwealth, aroused an unhappy spirit of bitter irreconcilable enmity between Anglicans and the descendants of the puritans which even still paralyzes the truest and best work of God's servants, alike in the camps of the English church and of dissenters.

PHILIP WESTCOTE

1687-1704. **Jas. II.; Will. III.; Anne**

GILBERT BUDGELL

1704-6. **Anne**

CHARLES HOPPING

1706/7-19. **Anne; Geo. I.**

In this case the diocesan register has the unusual intimation that he was licensed on the 24th of March, 1706/7, to the "vicarage or curacy of Bradninch on the nomination of the Dean and Canons of the Free Chapel of the King within his Castle of Windsor."

GILBERT YARD, M.A.

1719-22. **Geo. I.**

He was licensed 6th June, 1719, and he was instituted to Bickleigh on the 16th of November, 1722.

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[1] SPENCE, Vol. IV., p. 183.

THOMAS WOOD, B.A.

1722-33. Geo. I.; Geo. II.

His licence is dated 4th of March, 1722. The parish register has :—

> "Matthew, the son of Thomas Wood minister bapt. 7th April, 1727."
>
> "William, son of Thomas Wood (minister) baptized, 13th December, 1728."

The following document is preserved in the diocesan registry :—

A Terrier for the Parish of Bradninch in such Things as concern the Curate, made and signed the fifteenth day of May in the year of our Lord one thousand seven hundred and twenty seven.

1. The parish Church of Bradninch is served by a Curate whose salary is forty pounds per annum payable out of the Rectory.

2. The surplice fees are five shillings for marriage with License, and two shillings and six pence with Banns and six pence for Churching.

3. The furniture of the Church as following, six Bells, a clock and chimes, a Bier, a Pall for the Bier, a Pulpit Cloath and Cushion, a Cloath for the Communion table, two silver chalices with silver covers, no inscription, a silver salver[1] inscribed T. P. Warden 1716 two pewter flagons.

4. The Rector is charged with the repair of the Chancel, the parishioners with the repair of the Church and churchyard fence.

5. The ancient custom of the Parish is that the clerk should yearly collect the free contributions of the Parishioners. But the Parishioners do at present pay the clerk eight pounds yearly, as long as they shall think fit to continue it.

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[1] See above, p. 195.

6. The Sexon's Wages are fourty shillings per annum.

7. And ten shillings are paid to a dog-whipper.

THOMAS WOOD Curate.

JOHN MORGAN, THO PALMER	Churchwardens	PHILIP MOORE Mayor
		PETER WARREN
		PETER MANLY
JOHN SAUNDERS, JOHN MARTYN, RICHARD VOGWELL, HENRY MOLLENS	Overseers	FFRANS MELHUISH, FREDR: COOMBE, W. LINNINGTON, THOMAS PRATT.

Indorsement
1727
Bradninch

THOMAS CALLICE, M.A.

1732-58. Geo. II.

He was licensed as 'Impte Curate' on the 31st of August, 1733. In his incumbency the church bells were recast.[1]

The services in the church in 1744 were, every Lord's day, morning prayer with sermon, and evening prayer (in the afternoon) also with sermon. Further, there was service every wednesday and friday throughout the year, as well as on the red letter holy days, including all the days in holy week. But unfortunately this does not mean that all the services were said as they are appointed in the Prayer Book. For the great service of all, the Holy Eucharist—the central act of christian worship—was celebrated only five times in the whole year. The 'usual number' of communicants was 'between thirty and forty.' On Easter day it was generally 'near fifty,' but even on Easter day it sometimes fell short of forty.

It was the practice of the incumbent to begin to catechize the children every year on the second or third

[1] See p. 192.

sunday after Easter, and to continue the catechizing until the end of August. And most of the parishioners used to send their children and servants to be catechized.

JOHN BAYLY, B.A.

1758-64. Geo. II.; Geo. III.

He was licensed as 'Impte Curate,' on the 11th of August, 1758, on the nomination of Edward Sainthill, Esq. A chiming clock was placed in the tower in 1761.[1] His burial is entered in the register on the 18th of February, 1764.

GILBERT LANGDON, B.A.

1764-6. Geo. III.

He was licensed on the 22nd of August, 1764, on the nomination of Edward Sainthill, Esq., impropriator.

WALTER RICHARDS, B.A.

1766-70. Geo. III.

He was licensed to 'ye perpetual cure of Bradninch' on the nomination of Edward Sainthill, Esq. He resigned in 1770.

HENRY CHORLEY MANLEY, LL.B

1770-80. Geo. III.

He had served the parish as stipendiary curate from 1767, and he was licensed to the perpetual curacy on 27th July, 1770. He was probably related to recorder Manley, and, as a man learned in the law, he discharged the office of deputy recorder. During his time the church was reseated under a faculty, and he presented a new font.[2]

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[1] See p. 192.

[2] See p. 202.

THOMAS TANNER, M.A.

1780-1843. Geo. III.; Geo. IV.; Will. IV.; Vict.

He was licensed 1st September, 1780, on the nomination of Edward Sainthill, impropriator.[1]

At the beginning of the nineteenth century the fabric of the church was in a very dilapidated condition. In 1806-7 £757 10*s.* was laid out in repairs. These repairs included the rebuilding of the north wall, and the new roofing of the north aisle. On the 12th of June, 1830, John Crossman junior was paid £16 for whitewashing and repairing the church and tower. In 1837 Mr. Jarman was paid £11 18*s.* 6*d.* for repairing the roof. In 1838 a church rate of £50 was levied 'to complete the necessary repairs of the church.' In the following year, however, a further rate of 2*d.* in the pound, yielding £55 4*s.* 4*d.*, was raised. But far more than this was needed 'to complete' the necessary repair of the fabric. On the 30th April, 1840, the dean rural wrote to the churchwardens directing certain things to be done. The church and chancel were to be whitewashed, and the service books repaired. The south wall, which was much out of the perpendicular, was to be rebuilt. The sculptured portions of the pillars, and other parts of the church which were choked with whitewash, were to be cleansed. And he recommended that speedy application be made to the Church Building Society. This letter appears to have awakened the people to some perception of the urgency of the work before them. That it was great appears from an eye-witness. Oliver says :—

> "Whilst a manifest improvement had taken place in the town since a former visit, it was painful to witness the in-

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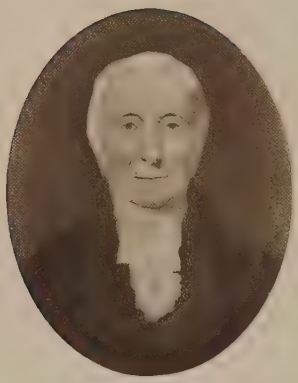
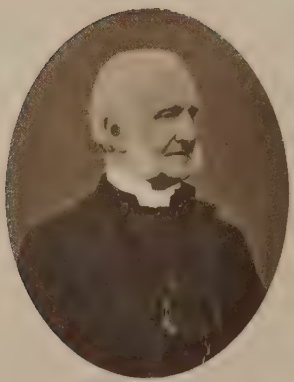
[1] This is the date of the licence as given by Mr. Tanner himself in his correspondence with Queen Anne's Bounty. The diocesan register gives the date of his licence as the 24th September, 1810. There is no question that he was incumbent from the date that he mentions, discharging the duties and receiving the stipend, and I am unable to account for the discrepancy.

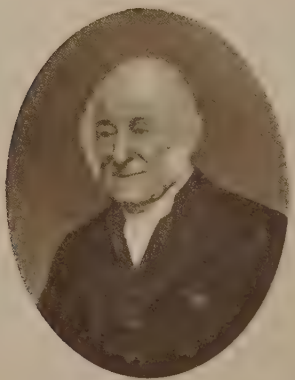


THOMAS TANNER, M.A.
1780—1843

SAMUEL JORDAN LOTT, B.C.L.
1844—1845

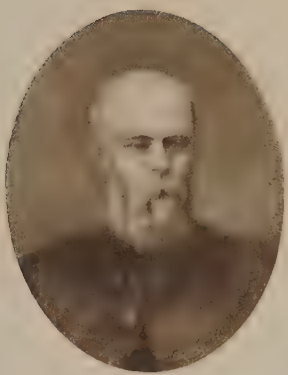


ALEXANDER RHIND WEBSTER
1846—1853



WILLIAM BEDELL COULCHER
1853—1864

HENRY PALMER LEAKEY
1804—1876



WILLIAM ARTHUR STRONG, M.A.
1876—1888

EDWARD CAPEL CURE, B.A.
1888—1897

CHARLES CROSLEGH, D.D.
1897

> attention displayed in regard to its Church, which ought to be considered as the principal object of interest by the parishioners. A most vulgar Buttress has been knocked up against the South wall. Advancing into the sacred edifice we found those enemies of Taste, the whitewashers, had succeeded in clothing up, with repeated layers, the capitals of the pillars; fortunately they have been prevented from trying their skill on its gorgeous Screen, which would do honour to any church; yet this exquisite work has been insulted by the vilest head-piece that could have been invented in the year 1620. . . . Unquestionably the repairs of the Chancel have been the best attended to; yet the Sanctuary, with its accompaniments, is anything but what a stranger might expect from an ancient, wealthy and favoured parish."[1]

On the 9th July, 1840, the vestry voted the sum of £300 "for the purpose of completing the repairs and improvements of the church and providing and fixing a hand-organ"; and the committee appointed to carry out the work borrowed the money from Mr. Henry Matthews, undertaking to repay it by instalments. But the accumulated negligences of countless years could not be made good by so small an outlay. The farther Mr. Whitaker, the architect, carried his examination, the greater was the damage disclosed. The roof of the south aisle proved to be insecure, and the present gable roof was substituted for the former lean-to. The south wall was rebuilt, both the stair turret leading to the rood loft, and the southern porch, being removed, so that there was no entrance left on that side. The church was reseated throughout under faculty dated 30th July, 1842. The committee reported on the 25th May, 1843, that they expended no less than £1,153 5*s.* 9*d.*, including £25 19*s.* 2*d.* for the new stonework of the great western portal.[2]

The cost of the upkeep of the church during the long

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[1] Rev. George Oliver, *Eccles. Antiq.*, Vol. II., pp. 15, 16.

[2] Mrs. Elizabeth Margaret Pearse, at her own expense, placed a new priest's door in the chancel, stipulating that the parishioners should give her the old tower stone doorway and door.

years of Mr. Tanner's incumbency suggests that we who are privileged to inherit from our forefathers the great gift of a noble church, must be prepared to make some sacrifice in return. In these days, better education teaches us to appreciate at their real worth these good things which have come to us from the past. And we should be degenerate and unworthy trustees if we did not gladly and ungrudgingly give of our substance to maintain in its beauty, and to hand on, that which has been lent to us, not for our own pleasure only, but for the glory of God and the use of His people from one generation to another.

SAMUEL JORDAN LOTT, B.C.L.

1844-5. Vict.

He was licensed on the 31st of January, 1844, on the nomination of the dean and chapter of Windsor.

Mr. Lott (Trinity and Downing Colls., Cambridge), was the second son of Harry Baines Lott, M.P., of Tracey house, Honiton. He came to Bradninch after his marriage in May, 1836, to a young widow, Louisa, sister of bishop Abraham, of Wellington, New Zealand, who, at the age of nineteen, had married the hon. Leveson Granville Keith-Murray, son of the earl of Dunmore. Mr. Lott lived at Dunmore house, which Mr. Murray had built and bequeathed to his wife. He pulled down the old vicarage, which stood in the space between the present house and the entrance gate, with its back to the road, and he built the new vicarage, intending to reside in it. His name appears in the registers from the year 1836 as assisting Mr. Tanner, and from the 16th September, 1838, as 'curate.' He died on the 15th December, 1845, aged 34, very greatly beloved. He was buried at the north-east corner of the church. In 1909, his only surviving sister, Miss Laura M. Lott, of Teignmouth, then 92 years of age, renovated his tombstone, and added a curb to it. When I gave Miss Lott a photograph of the renewed stone,

she told me that she distinctly remembered holding the ink-bottle at his bedside, while the dying man, in his humble submission, himself wrote down the words from the Prayer Book which he wished to have carved below his name. The inscriptions runs :—

To the memory of
SAMUEL JORDAN LOTT,
for two years and three months[1]
Incumbent of this parish,
Who deceased the 15th day of
December, A.D. 1845,
aged 34 years.

O Saviour of the world, Who by
Thy cross and precious blood hast
redeemed us, save me, O Lord.

ALEXANDER RHIND WEBSTER

1846-53. Vict.

He was licensed on the 20th of May, 1846, on the nomination of the patrons, at the instance of the reverend the hon. canon Anson. When I came here I found that memories of Mr. Webster still lingered, centring themselves mainly round his eloquence, his generosity, his 'Puseyism,' his conscientiousness, his lively crew of pupils, and his poetic gifts. He was famed as an impressive preacher. His habit of carrying dinners to poor folk dressed in his cassock, stamped him at once as a kind-hearted man, and a 'High' churchman. While his reputation for conscientiousness was upheld by a story, that, on finding his daughter had purchased some smuggled eau-de-cologne, he insisted on her buying postage stamps to the value of the evaded

[1] This is not strictly correct. Mr. Tanner died 15th November, 1843, and Mr. Lott was instituted 31st January, 1844. He notes this himself on page 105 of the register of burials.

duty, and then burning them. Captain Ratallack, R.N., one of his pupils, still living at Exmouth, has nothing but praise for his old tutor. In his time the Holy Communion was celebrated once in the month at 8 a.m., and once in the month after morning prayer. Morning prayer was said on wednesday and friday, and on saints' days.

WILLIAM BEDELL COULCHER

1853-64. Vict.

He was licensed on the 13th of April, 1853. During his residence the roof and the tower of the church gave a good deal of trouble. The roof was letting in the rain in 1855, and the state of the tower was so urgent that at the Easter vestry, on the 5th of May, 1856, a rate of 6*d.* in the pound was made for its repair, and the churchwardens were authorised to expend £150. It was at this time that the plaster was removed from the exterior, and the tower pointed. A woman, Mrs. Mary Rowe, was the contractor. At the same time a new hexagonal wooden dial was provided for the clock.

Mr. Coulcher was a man of very small stature, some five feet nothing in his stockings. He indulged in a perennial joke against himself, which is still remembered, that he never wore a *great* coat, and never lay *long* in bed.

HENRY PALMER LEAKEY

1864-76. Vict.

He was licensed on the 3rd of May, 1864. He was the son of James Leakey, the noted Devonshire painter, called by sir Thomas Lawrence, 'the English Wouvermans.' His father thought his drawing so promising and full of merit that he took him, when sixteen years old, into his studio. Here he was bidding fair to become a successful painter, when, in 1849, he decided to enter the ministry. After three years' study, he was ordained to a curacy at Hull.

Though a quarter of a century had not elapsed since £1,100 had been spent on our church, people were beginning to talk, when Mr. Leakey came, of a new 'restoration.' But he never undertook anything except necessary repairs, which, however, were considerable, £37 12*s.* 6*d.* being paid to Westlake alone in 1867.

He made no alteration in the services of the church, except that he adopted the use of the surplice in the pulpit, and substituted *Hymns Ancient and Modern* for *Tate and Brady*, which he found in undisputed possession; for up till then no hymns of any sort had been sung in our church. The new hymnbook was, however, so violently opposed by some members of the congregation, that it was withdrawn in favour of the S.P.C.K.'s *Church Hymns*. In 1865 it was proposed to move the organ, and to build an organ chamber on the north to receive it. But the plan was not generally approved, and nothing was done.

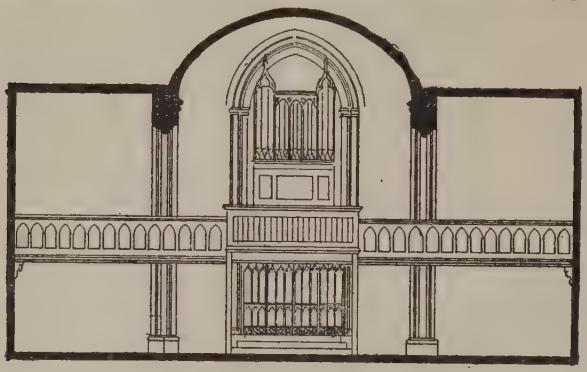
After leaving Bradninch Mr. Leakey was vicar of Ston Easton (where he was buried) 1885-96; minister of the octagon chapel, Bath, 1896-9; and vicar of Chilcompton, 1899-1902.

WILLIAM ARTHUR STRONG, M.A.

1876-88. Vict.

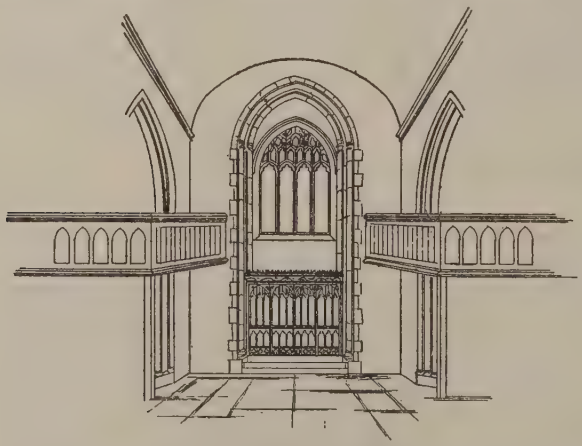
A student of Christ Church, Oxford, where he graduated with honours in mathematics, he was licensed to "the Perpetual Curacy or Titular Vicarage of the parish church of Bradninch," on the 31st August, 1876. The need of restoring the church, which had been already felt in Mr. Leakey's time, was at once seen by the new vicar to be imperative. And he hastened to form a scheme for raising the money, and carrying out the work. He knew that he would have to combat old traditions, and even a certain amount of organised opposition, and being a wise man he proceeded with great discretion. The timely offer of gifts of a southern

porch[1] and a stained glass window as memorials, gave



The Gallery before Alteration

him an opening for initiating his scheme. He desired that all that was to be done should be, in a true sense,



The Gallery after Alteration

[1] The inscription inside the porch, which was added years later, gives the date of its building as 1876—an error, as Messrs. Hayward's specification, dated July, 1880, shews.

restoration of the best features of the church to their original position and beauty. And his first move was to open out the impressive vista through the fine tower arch, which bygone days of ignorance and bad taste had blocked up by a cumbrous and unnecessary organ-gallery. With the hearty assent of the people, though

The Tower under Repair

not without some obstructive opposition, he obtained a faculty, dated the 5th of June, 1880, under which he removed the organ into S. John Baptist's chapel, and brought the west window into view by cutting away the central part of the gallery, and the ringing loft, which had been erected over the western door. He provided a wrought-iron frame with guides for bell ropes in the tower, and reseated the choir in pitch pine. By these

unobtrusive changes he effected such improvements as gradually inclined the congregation to desire to carry them further. And the disaster to the tower, which was seriously injured by lightning on the 8th of December, 1886, gave a new impetus to the plans already suggested. He procured a report from the architects, which contemplated laying out a sum of £1,344 in "a new nave roof, new flooring and reseating, a new pulpit, new heating apparatus, the enlargement of the vestry, and the removal of the earth which had gradually become heaped up against the walls." Instructions were given to proceed, subscriptions were invited, and on August 20th, 1887, a sale of work for the fund produced £67 12*s.* 9*d.* But what he had designed was destined to be brought to completion by another hand.

I know Mr. Strong only through his works. At every turn I have felt the reality and the permanence of his power. He was the first incumbent of modern times to restore to the parishioners the privileges attaching to a loyal obedience to the directions of the Book of Common Prayer. He introduced a celebration of the Holy Communion every sunday. He restored the service "appointed to be used daily throughout the year," which, though never wholly disused, had long ago shrunk to a bi-weekly evensong. He added a children's service on sunday afternoon, and changed the hour of evensong to 6.30 p.m. At first his congregation at this service numbered only some 40 or 50. But his devoted assistant, Mr. Langdon, tells me that "his preaching soon proved such a power that the church was generally full, and large numbers of dissenters used regularly to attend." Church life began to flow with new energy through the numerous channels which he opened for it. He established a system of organised church work, and he handed on to his successors a devoted band of district visitors, as well as flourishing branches of the Church of England Temperance Society, and the Girls' Friendly Society. In fact, the efforts of his successors

have been mainly directed to maintaining and extending the activities which he set on foot.

Mr. Strong was once described at a local meeting amid enthusiastic applause as "a man who loved everyone, and whom everyone loved." But though this was true generally, his very earnestness and loyalty to church principles drew down upon him considerable opposition from those whose sympathies lay in another direction, and his work here was at times made difficult.

The simple account which the reverend F. E. W. Langdon, now of Membury, has written for me, presents him so happily that I print it as it stands.

> "I first saw Mr. Strong when I went to Bradninch early in 1880 to interview him about the curacy. I remember, when I caught sight of him on the platform at Hele station, saying to myself, 'What a little man!' But I had not been very long with him before I discovered that the 'little man' had a great spiritual, not to mention mental, equipment. He took great pains to impress upon me the importance of diligent visiting, quoting the well-known saying, 'A house-going parson makes a church-going people,' at the same time pointing out to me that the circumstances of Bradninch demanded unremitting attention to my ministerial duties. He shewed me every consideration during my diaconate, telling me always to fall back upon him for a sermon if at any time I should be hard pressed. He had a horror of anything like slipshod preaching, and laid great stress on the necessity of study and prayer in the preparation of sermons. His own example was in exact accordance with his words. His personal religion was intense, and he was a regular and devout student. He gave the most whole-hearted attention to the parish, and had a remarkable influence upon all with whom he came into close contact. I had the most ardent admiration and the deepest affection for him. Although he was sometimes rather severe in his criticisms, yet he was such a thorough christian gentleman that I never had even a passing feeling of offence, but always laid all he said to heart, and have profited by it all my life. His sermons were a great power, specially I think in the evening, when there were large congregations. He brought out, as one of the factory men once said to me, 'so many points.' No one who worked with him could fail to gain the highest ideal

> of the priesthood. He was splendidly backed up by his wife, who in all that he did was ever ready with her sympathy and counsel."

He resigned this living on his appointment in 1888 to the rectory of Pendock, in the diocese of Worcester. He died at Malvern the 27th April, 1898, and was buried here close to the priest's door. His widow, who spent the remaining years of her life at Banbury, Bradninch, died the 27th August, 1905, and was buried in the same grave.

EDWARD CAPEL CURE, B.A.

1888-97. Vict.

He was licensed on the 20th of June, 1888.

Carrying forward the restoration of the church which Mr. Strong had begun, Mr. Capel Cure procured a faculty dated the 16th September, 1889. Under this, Hayward, Son & Tait, architects, removed the two remaining sections of the gallery at the west end; raised the floor of the chancel; placed marble steps and pavement in the sanctuary; and removed the reredos, three deal panels bearing 'the Creed and the Ten Commandments,' erected about 1860. The stone pulpit, designed by Parsons, and executed by Harry Hems, was erected; the vestry at the north-west end was built; the nave roofed; the aisles ceiled; the area west of the screen seated anew in pitch pine; and the church heated with hot water. The organ, rearranged and enlarged under Mr. Capel Cure's expert guidance, was converted into the fine instrument that it is to-day, and placed further back against the north wall of the chapel. The estimated cost of the whole was £1,173. The building committee consisted of the vicar and churchwardens (*ex officio*), the reverend G. D. Melhuish, J. Rowell, jun., Peter Warren and George Bonner.

Mr. Capel Cure maintained the services in the church as he found them, except that he added a celebration of

the Holy Communion upon every day in the year for which an epistle and gospel are appointed.

In 1896 he was presented by King's College, Cambridge, to the rectory of Stower Provost, in the diocese of Salisbury.

CHARLES CROSLEGH, D.D.

1897. Vict.; Edw. VII.; Geo. V.

He was licensed to the vicarage on the 27th January, 1897. The patrons had been desirous to have the vicarage house enlarged, and, as it would not accommodate the new vicar's family, this was the first improvement taken in hand. Some very necessary re-
1898 arrangements were made in the interior, and three new rooms were added at a cost of more than £600. Of this, £100 was granted by dean Boyd's fund, £200 by Queen Anne's Bounty, and the rest was provided by the vicar. The ruined stables were rebuilt later, at a cost of £130, of which £80 was borrowed under the Gilbert Acts from the Bounty Office, 19th July, 1899.

In 1899 a broad cement pathway was laid from
1899 the street to the church, and the handsome iron gates were repaired and rehung.

In 1901, under a faculty, certain small but effective alterations were made in the church. A new door of solid oak,[1] opening outwards and inwards, was placed in the porch instead of the former door of pine;
1901 the priests' desks, which inconveniently crowded the communion rail, were removed to their normal position near the screen. In the new vestry light was thrown upon the steps leading into the church by a rearrangement of the partitions and the insertion of glass panels in the outer door. Hanging lamps were added to the standard lamps in the body of the church.

[1] The hinges of this door are unique. They were designed by the reverend Guy Halliday.

A large fireproof door, forming a safe, was let into the wall of the choir vestry, and a smaller safe was put in the priests' vestry. A third safe was placed in the vicarage for the parish registers.

1903 In 1903 the bells were rehung, and the octave completed, a new clock and chimes were provided, and a new roof and new floors supplied for the tower, as already related,[1] at a cost of over £500.

1906 In 1906 two alabaster tablets were set upon the chancel walls, bearing the names of the rectors and vicars since 1261.

1907 In 1907 the old piscina from Trinity chapel was placed in the vestry under a stone canopy.

The year 1908 saw the completion of S. Disen's hall, which was opened by the bishop of Crediton on the 6th of October. In the same year the unsightly 1908 brick shed over the heating stove in the church was encased in stone, and a stone flue substituted for the iron stackpipe.

1909 In 1909 the north wall of the churchyard was rebuilt; and the church and S. Disen's hall were lighted by electricity under the able direction of Dr. John Purves, who generously gave his services gratuitously.

The sums expended on these various improvements amount to not less than £2,500.

LIST OF CHURCHWARDENS

1616.	John Geere	John Smith
1621.	Henry Shapcott	Henry Richards
1625.	John Murch	William Wills
1660.	Henrie May	Robert Taylor
1679.	T—— L——	N—— B——
1687.	John Atkins	Richard Beare
1694.	Thomas Warren	Peter Manley, Jun.
1695.	Peter Manley, Jun.	Richard Vogwell
1696.	ffrancis Melhuish	Richard Palmer

[1] See above, pp. 194-5.

1713.	Peter Warren	John Wright
1717.	Robert Seager	Thomas Pratt
1718.	John Morrish	Richard Vogwell
1719.	William Palmer	John Morrish
1720.	James Maunder	Matthew Pullen
1721.	Clement Murch	Richard Pratt
1722.	Charles Richards	Henry Slade
1723.	John Norrish	William Linnington
1724.	Philip Moore	Henry Bowden
1725.	John Kingdon	John Norris
1726.	Henry Murch	Michael Frankpitt
1727.	Thomas Palmer	John Morgan
1728.	John Wright	John Martyn, Jun.
1729.	John Murch	John Wright
1730.	John Wright	Amos Palmer
1731.	Philip Moore	Symon Stephens
1732.	Peter Warren	Andrew Melhuish
1733.	John Melhuish	John Maunder
1734.	fferdinando Coombe	Thomas Stone
1735.	John Moore	John Murch
1737.	Kelland Barrett	Thomas Stone
1738.	Thomas Stone	Anthony Martyn
1739.	James Maunder	John Gervis
1740.	Richard Carpenter	John Gervis
1741.	William Golsworthy	Edward Ellis
1761.	John Richards	Anthony Martin
1806-7.	John Drew	Clement Murch
1807-9.	Ellis Bowden	John Drew
1809-10.	John Drew	Charles Martyn
1810-11.	John Drew	Thomas Dewdney
1811-12.	John Drew	John Smith
1812-13.	John Drew	John Dewdney
1813-14.	John Drew	H. S. Bowden
1814-15.	John Drew	William Palmer
1815-16.	John Drew	William Drew
1816-17.	John Drew	John Matthews
1817-18.	John Drew	John Smith
1818-19.	John Drew	Nicholas Drake
1819-20.	John Drew	Henry Bowden
1820-1.	John Drew	Robert Drew
1821-2.	John Dewdney	John Drew
1822-3.	John Dewdney	John Drew
1823-4.	William Martyn	John Drew
1824-5.	John Drew	Daniel Middleton
1825-6.	John Drew	John Batten
1826-7.	J. Drew	J. Matthews
1827-8.	J. Drew	T. Dewdney

1828-9.	John Drew	Richard Martyn
1829-30.	John Drew	John Dewdney
1830-1.	John Drew	William Martyn
1831-2.	William Drew	C. Drew
1832-3.	Daniel Middleton	Charles Drew
1833-4.	C. Drew	Wm. Norrish
1834-5.	C. Drew	John Sharland
1835-6.	C. Drew	— Middleton
1836-7.	H. S. Bowden	George Pearse
1837-8.	George Pearse	Charles Drew
1838-9.	George Pearse	Daniel Middleton
1839-40.	John Sharland	John Dewdney
1840-3.	George Pearse	John Dewdney
1843-4.	George Pearse	Clement Murch
1844-5.	George Pearse	Joseph Ham
1845-6.	George Pearse	Henry Evans
1846-7.	George Pearse	Charles Matthews
1847-8.	George Pearse	John Sharland
1848-9.	George Pearse	Henry Palmer
1849-50.	George Pearse	Robert Tremlett
1850-1.	George Pearse	Francis Liddon
1851-2.	George Pearse	Henry Matthews
1852-3.	George Pearse	W. H. Besley
1853-5.	George Pearse	John Gray
1855-8.	George Pearse	Charles Cuming
1858-9.	George Pearse	John Sharland
1859-61.	George Pearse	William Frost
1861-3.	W. H. Besley	William Frost
1863-72.	W. H. Besley	Ambrose Shere
1872-3.	Charles Drew	Ambrose Shere
1873-5.	William Drew	Ambrose Shere
1875-8.	C. Drew	Ambrose Shere
1878-87.	T. E. Wrighton	Ambrose Shere
1887-8.	John Rowell	Ambrose Shere
1888-97.	John Rowell	C. T. Cuming
1897-9.	John Rowell	George Plummer
1899-1909.	John Rowell	Peter Warren (*died in office*)
1909-10.	William Baker	T. C. Shere

So much we know about our parish church and what appertains to it. Forty-three generations of Bradninch men and women have come to it in all the great crises of their lives. In it they were christened. In it they were married. And from it they were tenderly borne at last to their resting-place in 'God's acre,' the beautiful,

old-world name for the burial-ground, wherein our tired bodies await the new life.

Churchyard

For centuries the parishioners have been buried in the small plot of ground lying immediately round the church. The only other burial-ground known is the 'old graveyard' on the hill,[1] used at the time of the plague in 1348, and again during the cholera which was brought here by men engaged in rebuilding the town after the fire in 1832.

The Yew Tree

Different theories have been propounded to account for the presence of yews in our churchyards. Some hold that they are no more than a survival of the cypress, which was sacred to Pluto, and was used at funerals in pre-christian days. While others regard them as a reminiscence of the time when the trusty bow was the chief weapon in national defence, and when the importance of national defence was so wholesomely brought home to every household in the land. The state was careful to train the manhood of the nation, even from tender years, in the use of arms, as appears from the various enactments on the subject made at different times.

> "Be it enacted that . . . Fathers, Governors, and Rulers of such as be of tender age, do teach and bring up them in the knowledge of the same shooting. And that every man having a man-child, or men-children in his house, shall provide, ordain, and have in his house for every man-child being of the age of seven years and above, till he shall come to the age of seventeen years, a Bow and two Shafts, to induce and learn them, and bring them up in shooting."[2]

Both children and grown-up men must have within their reach an abundant supply of good bows.

> "No Bowyer shall sell any bow of yew, for any person being between the age of seven years and fourteen years,

[1] See above, p. 71 note.

[2] 33 Hen. VIII., cap. 9, iii.

> above the price of twelve pence; and the same Bowyers shall have bows of yew of all prices from six pence the piece, to twelve pence the piece, for youth between the said ages of seven years and fourteen years." [1]

And again,

> "Whosoever shall sell a long Bow of Yew above the price of three shillings and four pence, shall forfeit twenty shillings." [2]

Yet the yew-tree, the king of trees for making bows, must be used sparingly, lest it fail out of the land.

> "Every Bowyer . . . shall for every Bow that he maketh of yew, make four other bows meet to shoot in, of elm, wich, hasil, ashe, or other wood apt for the same, upon the pain to lose and forfeit, for every such bow so lacking, three shillings and four pence." [3]

In age, I presume, and certainly in girth, our yew-tree cannot compare with many which are to be found elsewhere throughout the country. But as a timber tree I have never seen one equal to it. It rises with a straight and undivided trunk to the height of 13 ft. from the ground. It is computed that it would furnish material to make seven hundred long bows of the ancient standard size.

The Gates

On the 9th of June, 1836, the churchwardens were authorized by the vestry to lay out "a sum not exceeding £15 in erecting a pair of iron gates with two stone piers," to take the place of the worn out wooden gate then in use. This sum was supplemented by a gift of £16 from the corporation on the 10th May, 1837, and by voluntary contributions from the parishioners amounting to £26 0*s.* 6*d.* Out of the fund thus made up £26 4*s.* 11*d.* was paid to Richard Spry for finding and fixing the granite pillars and steps,

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[1] 33 Hen. VIII., cap. 9, vi. [2] 22 Edw. IV., cap. 4.
[3] 33 Hen. VIII., cap. 9, v.

and £26 5*s.* to Mr. Skinner, of Tiverton, for the iron gates.

The Church House

It was not until the middle of the last century that any enlargement of the churchyard was deemed to be necessary. In 1855 a burial board was formed, which purchased for the sum of £220, from the mayor and burgesses, a strip of land adjoining it on the south. There were four houses on this strip, chief among them one which had been known from time immemorial as 'the church house.' It contained "one buttery, one hall and kitchen, and two chambers over the same." It had been erected along with other buildings on land belonging to the corporation. But by a deed dated 20th December, 1625, the mayor and burgesses conveyed the property "for the term of 1000 years at the rent of one grain of wheat payable to the mayor and burgesses and under the high rent of 9*d.* to the lord of the borough yearly, in trust . . ." the issues and profits being "for the benefit of the poorest sort of people."

The building was used variously for meetings, for the distribution of alms to the poor, and for a school. In the year 1666 the church house was valued at £100.[1] And in 1820 the trust property yielded a rental of £7 12*s.*

The church house and cottages were razed to the ground,[2] and their sites, together with the gardens belonging to them, planted with cypress, yew, and privet, were fenced off from the property of Mr. John Player, which lay to the south, by a stone wall, in lieu of the existing hedges, and finally, on the 21st September, 1857, were "separated and set apart from all unhallowed ordinary and common uses whatsoever, and dedicated and consecrated as and for additional burial ground."

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[1] At the same date the guildhall was valued at £60. See above, p. 105.

[2] A curious coin of Harold I. was found here.

Some of the ratepayers did not wish their dead to rest in consecrated ground. Their wishes were respected. What is usually done in such a case is to leave unconsecrated a piece of the new ground purchased by the burial board. In this case the burial board adopted a different course. They came to an arrangement whereby on the one hand the whole of the ground which they had bought was to be consecrated, and on the other hand they were to pay out of the rates a sum of money to provide additional burial ground over which they were to have no control. As a part of this agreement, at a vestry-meeting held on the 4th October, 1855, it was moved by the reverend Charles Baker, and duly seconded, and carried unanimously,

> "That the new burial ground shall be held and used in like manner and subject to the same laws and regulations in all respects as the existing churchyard of the parish, and that no part of it shall remain unconsecrated."[1]

In fulfilment of the other side of the bargain, at a meeting of the vestry held on the 14th of February, 1856, it was unanimously resolved

> "That the sum of £50 be voted to the Burial Board out of the Poor-rates to enable the said Board to conclude the business connected with providing the additional Burial Ground for the use of this Parish."

And the business was concluded by the drawing of a cheque for £30 on the 26th of April, 1856, on Sander's bank, Exeter, in favour of Mr. Baker. The cheque was cleared on the 14th of May, and the transaction is entered in the schedule, or balance-sheet, for the year, in these words :—

> "Rev. C. Baker, as agreed on, in place of Burial Ground for use of Dissenting Chapel £30."

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[1] The burial board borrowed £300 "on mortgage of the poor-rate to be paid off by instalments in 20 years."

On the 18th May, 1883, the burial board purchased from Arthur Smithcott, of Silverton, for £150, thirty-one perches or thereabouts, at the west end of and
1883 adjoining the churchyard, formerly called 'the churchyard orchard,' numbered 37 on the tithe commutation map. The whole of this was consecrated.

A further addition was made to the graveyard in 1899, taking in old houses known as part of
1899 Newhaven. The whole of the land then added to the east of the walk that runs parallel to the western wall was consecrated by the bishop of Crediton on the 20th of December, 1899.

"By Order in Council of the 2nd day of February," 1899, it was directed that, with certain reservations, "burials should be discontinued in the parish church and in the old churchyard, and also in the baptist chapel and in the old chapel yard."

I regret to say that, from all I can learn, it has not been, at all events for more than a century, a tradition in Bradninch to expend much trouble in caring for the churchyard. I find in one of the registers a curious entry:—

> "The Church-Wardens pay me annually *one Guinea* for the Pasture in the Church-Yard to prevent *Horses* from being turned into it. Witness, etc. Tho. Tanner."

I confess I am not able to form a very clear notion as to what the entry means. But it seems to shew that the churchwardens of those days were easily satisfied in the matter of their duty to keep the churchyard in order.

Some families there are who habitually bestow the tenderest care on the graves of their dear ones at rest. And I greatly wish this were more general, so that strangers might be constrained to say, What pride these people take in their burial-ground! In these days

indeed it is very unusual to find in any well-cared-for churchyard the old-fashioned untidy mounds, which quite prevent the use of a lawn-mower. If the sward were levelled, the site of all known graves at present without a stone would be indicated by a small headstone, neat and inexpensive, bearing name and date. When people come to understand and appreciate better what is done in other places, I feel sure that we shall no longer permit ourselves to be behindhand in shewing our care for the resting-place of our dead.

I cannot refrain from adding a word which does not strictly belong to the province of the historian. It is a word of warning against falling into the snare of copying what we see so commonly in the cemeteries on the continent—the cheap tawdriness of beads and glass, an offering wholly un-English, and altogether unworthy of people of taste and education.

The writer of the history of an English parish very soon finds that his story becomes very largely the story of the church in that parish. And this, not because of any prejudice or predilection of his own, but because the life of the people has from earliest times been inextricably linked with the life of their church, and for the most part in country places it is to the church that we have to look for our records.

Of dissent[1] in Bradninch before the beginning of the nineteenth century, what is known is very little. And for that little we are, curiously enough, almost wholly indebted to the archives of the church. A licence to preach was granted to a nonconformist society at Bradninch in the year 1672.[2] In 1744, when there were

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[1] I here use the word 'dissent' and not 'nonconformity' advisedly, as being more in accordance with the truth of history, nonconformity pointing rather to 'a difference of practice within the church,' dissent to 'a schism from the church.'

[2] *Dev. Ass.*, Vol. IX., p. 276.

323 houses in the parish, 17 were inhabited by dissenters—4 by presbyterians, and 13 by members of the 'Society of Friends.' The presbyterians had a house licensed, but no one taught in it. The 'quakers,' as they were commonly called, had a place likewise licensed, but they "never met there except when some of their itinerant Teachers called upon them."[1] Where the presbyterian place of worship was I have not discovered. The site of the 'meeting house' of the 'quakers' was acquired by Robert Palmer, a methodist, and on it, after the fire of 1835-6,[2] he built a Wesleyan chapel. At a later date this building came into the hands of the corporation,[3] and for years past it has been rented by the vicars of Bradninch, who have used it for the miscellaneous purposes of church work. Since the rebuilding of S. Disen's hall it has been mainly used as a lads' club.

Methodist Meeting-house

For the story of dissent since 1813 I am indebted to Thomas Henry Hepburn, Esq., J.P., one of the trustees of the baptist chapel. I print it in his own words :—

"In 1813 Mr. John Saunders, solicitor, of Plymouth, who owned property in Bradninch, and often visited his uncle, Mr. Saunders, at his house in Tiverton Street,[4] thinking that there was 'great lack of evangelical teaching in the Town,' fitted up a barn near the guildhall as a chapel, and arranged for services to be conducted on Sundays by ministers of various denominations in the neighbourhood. In the following year, the Rev. Charles Sharp, formerly of

Baptist Chapel

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[1] *Answers to Bishop Claggett's Interrogatories.*

[2] See above, p. 110.

[3] Mr. Palmer died on the 6th December, 1850, and the beneficiaries under his will sold the building on the 19th of March, 1864, to Henry Sparkes Bowden, who, on the 3rd May, 1865, conveyed it to trustees "upon the same trusts, for the benefit of the poor of Bradninch, as the 'Church House Tenement' was held."

[4] *I.e.* Hên Street.

Helstone, settled at Bradninch, and became the recognized minister; at the same time the present Baptist church, open to members of other denominations, was formed.

"Soon after Mr. Sharp's settlement, owing to the fact that children attending the Chapel Sunday School[1] were not permitted to attend old Mr. Podger's school, a Day School[2] was started in connection with the chapel. The school was carried on as a 'British School,' with unsectarian religious teaching in accordance with the principles of the British and Foreign School Society, and from 1872 it accepted Government aid, with Government supervision. In 1894 it was handed over to the Bradninch School Board.

"The Rev. Chas. Sharp, who retired in 1845, 'after a laborious and useful ministry of 31 years,' was succeeded by the Rev. Chas. Baker, who continued minister until his death in 1874.

"During Mr. Sharp's and Mr. Baker's ministries, many additions were made to the chapel property and buildings, the most important being the rebuilding of the chapel, near the original site, in 1833, after the disastrous fire of 1832.[3]

The property now consists of the chapel, with old burial ground and manse; a new schoolroom erected

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[1] It should be stated explicitly that Mr. Sharp was the first to open a Sunday-school in Bradninch. And old people, regular worshippers in the baptist chapel from childhood, have told me that that school was the means of drawing them, and many others, away from the church.

[2] At this school the fees were much higher than at the 'national school,' which, being founded for promoting the education of the poor in the principles of the national church, charged only a penny a week. The result was that it became no uncommon thing for the more well-to-do among church people to send their children to the 'British school' in preference to the 'national school,' which was regarded, and often spoken of, as 'a charity school.'

[3] See above, p. 108.

in 1879 with the aid of friends of all denominations;[1] and a new burial ground.

"Since 1874 the successive ministers have been the Revs. F. G. Masters, T. G. Strong, John Watts, R. C. Lemin, W. Wall, B. E. Horlick, M.A., and G. W. Bonell, the last of whom has been minister since 1904."

The existence of dissent—the separation between followers of the one Lord and Master—is a very melancholy and painful chapter in the history of christianity. The fault does not by any means lie wholly with any one party. All parties in turn have been persecutors. For persecution begets persecution. Romanists sent bishops and priests to the stake, and drove English churchmen into exile. The exiles returned from Frankfort and Geneva, embittered by their harsh treatment, deeply imbued with un-English views and strange doctrines, calling themselves 'puritans,' and claiming to be the only true purifiers of the faith. When in turn power came into their hands, they used it to force upon the country the substitution of the doctrines and forms of worship of the foreign Calvinists for those of the reformed church of England. To accomplish this they drove 8,000 of the clergy from their parishes, condemned the aged archbishop to the block after he had been acquitted of treason by his peers, and finally beheaded the king. Churchmen too, when the restoration put them once more in possession of their own, were tainted by the same vindictive spirit which had animated romanists and puritans. The act of 1664[2] "to prevent and suppress seditious Conventicles"; the act of 1665 "for restraining Non-Conformists from Inhabiting in Corporations"; and the act of 1673 "for preventing

[1] A voluntary school-rate was levied, one third of which was paid to the 'British school.'

[2] This assault on the liberty of the subject would have taken effect a year earlier had it not been that, in the face of king and commons, who were both eager for it, the house of lords had interposed delay. See HALLAM, *Const. Hist.*, Vol. II., p. 347 note.

Dangers which may happen from Popish Recusants," all embody principles which no one would nowadays dream of defending. The spirit of violence and of intolerance which underlay all this legislation was not only wrong as violating the spirit of christianity, but it proved in effect to be a most mischievous blunder. Rancour bred of a sense of wrong does not readily subside, as we can unhappily see to this day. In spite of the passing of years the churchman still remembers the merciless tyranny of the puritan domination. The dissenter hugs his sense of injustice and stern repression. Both alike still shudder at the remembrance of the fires of Smithfield, while the English romanist of to-day has not forgotten the violence of reformation times. Truly "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." But thanks be to Him that there are hopeful signs on all sides [1] of a growing desire for such reunion as should bring us nearer to the ideal which our Lord sets before us when He prays, not only for 'the twelve,' but for all to the end of time who believe on Him through their word, that we may all 'be perfected into one,' into a unity ineffable, and yet such as the world cannot fail to see and acknowledge.[2] As we come nearer to this divine ideal the wrongfulness of our separation will be realized, and our divisions will vanish away.

In early times education was wholly supplied by the

[1] In the United States of America a very remarkable movement is on foot, which aims directly at intercommunion and reunion, on the basis of recognising the historic ministry of the church. In this country there is a project for the formation of an alliance of whole denominations, to be called "The United Free Evangelical Church of England." The movement is directed against what its promoters describe as "nothing less than a scandal," the multiplicity, in our towns and villages, of little congregations of different sects which, they say, are "all starved and feeble." The motive is not the highest. But at least it is a step in the right direction, and it bears in it the promise of a good hope, not for our own day it may be, but for future generations.

[2] *S. John*, xvii. 20-3.

church. The clergy were the only educated people in the land. Every religious house and cathedral had its school, where the path to learning was open to the poor as well as to the rich. The popularity of the church in the middle ages arose largely from the fact that its vast political influence was always used to advance the liberties of the people. It was the great cultivator of learning and art, and it did its best to educate the people. In the eye of the nobles the labouring population were beings of an inferior caste. In the eye of the law they were chattels. In the eye of the church they were brethren in Christ—souls to be won and trained. Even so late as the reformation it was Cranmer, the archbishop, who was the champion of the poor man's son, insisting that he should not be shut out from the benefits of the newly founded grammar schools, and the universities to which they led the way. The first trace of an educational establishment at Bradninch is in the school kept by the chantry priests in the little building known to this day as 'College.'

Schools

Mr. Phare, the extruded rector, kept the wolf from the door as best he might by teaching. On the 22nd of August, 1662, Humphrey Marshall obtained a licence to keep a school here.

In the eighteenth century, with the decadence of the church, education went back. In 1744 there was no public or charity school, endowed or otherwise, maintained in the parish, but there were three persons who taught children to read, and one who taught a few to write. And before the end of the century the church again stepped in, and supplied a school for children of the poor, charging 1*d.* a week. This was held for a time at the church house. Small private schools were kept at rather a later date by a Mrs. Squire, and by Mr. Peter Warren in Hên Street. But the seminary, which for seventy years—from 1759 to 1829—threw all others into the shade, was the private venture of a man who was

described to me by one of his pupils as 'a very great schoolmaster.'

The portly figure of worthy Mr. John Podger made a deep impression upon the children. He wore shining leather shoes with bright buckles, grey knitted stockings, yellow leathern breeches, a very long waistcoat, and a blue coat with brass buttons. He was a strict disciplinarian. "You could hear a pin drop in the school," and his long rod came down with unerring accuracy upon the head of any small delinquent. When Felicia Ellis gave her christian name in repeating the catechism he sternly rebuked her, saying, "Go home and tell your mother that I will have no fine names here. Children should be called Moll, or Sal, or Pol." And ever afterwards Felicia had to answer to one of these monosyllables.

Podger kept his school on the first floor of a building known as 'the shambles,'[1] at the north end of Middle Row. It consisted of two stories, and a roofed stone staircase led outside up to the first floor. He had more than a hundred pupils, and four or five assistants. His fees were 1*s.* a week, including all extras, 7*d.* including writing, and 5*d.* without writing.

On Podger's death in 1829 a Mr. Barton took on the school, which he transferred shortly after to Cross, and then to Bowling Green.

Mr. Podger's strong personality had completely monopolized the education of the town, and emptied the small school in the church house, and it was due to his success that the National Society had no school here during his lifetime. After his death his school was

[1] This was originally a market house. It stood "amidst the street in Bradninch near the street which leadeth to the gate of the churchyard." Here "Victuallers, Merchants, and other persons using the markets and fairs" of the town, had been accustomed to buy and sell. When the corporation tried to 'gather gear' by imposing a toll upon all goods brought into the borough for sale, the farmers rebelled, and the market was deserted.

carried on in the same building by Mr. Barton. But when, on the demolition of 'the shambles,' Mr. Barton removed to Cross, the National Society stepped in.

At the beginning of last century a Miss Linnington kept a superior school for farmers' daughters in a house now pulled down, next door to Ye Olde Whyte Lyon (now the residence of Mr. Edwin Dunn). The children of the farmers at Trinity used to come 'on a pullen,'[1] Mr. Murch and Mr. Hooper supplying the horse in alternate weeks.

By an indenture made 3rd January, 1838, there was conveyed to trustees, for the sum of £120, a messuage at the corner of Church Lane, on which was built, under the usual National Society's Trust, "a school for the children of such poor persons as shall from time to time reside in the parish of Bradninch." The building contained two schoolrooms, one above the other, the boys being taught downstairs, and the girls having to pass through their classroom to reach their own overhead. On the 31st December, 1849, the land adjoining, as far as the churchyard gate, was conveyed under 5 Vict., cap. 38, to the vicar and churchwardens, as "a site for a courtlage and offices for the use of the National Schools." A stone staircase was built outside leading to the girls' schoolroom. But later on a new room was built for the girls, and the upper floor of the old school was removed. The next step in expansion was the removal of the boys to the old Wesleyan chapel, rented for the purpose, and the National School building was left to the girls and infants.

The government inspector visited the Bradninch schools for the first time in 1854. Mr. Collins rebuilt the school for the children at Hele in 1855.

On the 25th June, 1874, a boys' school, in union with

[1] *I.e.* on a pillion. It was not, however, on a pillion—that is, a cushion behind the saddle—but in paniers slung across the horse's back, that the children were carried.

the National Society, was erected in Western Town, on a site purchased from the trustees of Henry Matthews, for the sum of £75. In 1894 all the schools were put under the school board. The Church Lane school was condemned in 1896, as failing to meet modern requirements, and in 1897 the infant school was built. Under the act of 1902, which abolished the school boards, all the schools were taken over by the county council, which holds the church school in Western Town under an agreement but without rent for the girls, and the British school under a like agreement at a small rent for the boys.

S. Disen's Hall

The condemned school in Church Lane, of the double foundation of 1838 and 1849, remained in the hands of the vicar and churchwardens, and continued to be used as a sunday school, the vicar being invested "with power to use, or direct the premises to be used, for the purposes of a Sunday School, under his exclusive controul and management." In 1908 the building was so dilapidated that it became necessary to spend a considerable sum to preserve it from ruin. The opportunity was too good to be wasted. Church work in the parish was heavily handicapped for lack of a suitable building in which to hold meetings. So we determined to make the best of the space we possessed. What remained of the old school was new-roofed, new-ceiled, new-plastered, and new-floored throughout. In the re-arrangement, the space between the house and the churchyard was taken in, and the whole was divided into three compartments, capable of being used either separately as class- or committee-rooms, or conjointly as a hall, with its platform, and ante-room. The placing of a gallery in the large room—'the hall'—furnishes yet a fourth class-room, and increases the accommodation for public meetings. Much of the work was done in memory of departed friends. The new room, 'Strong's room,' was built in memory of the reverend William Arthur Strong

and his wife, and the panelled oak gallery in memory of the reverend Edward Ernest Atherton; while the platform, or 'the rectors' room,' was erected in memory of the incumbents of the parish from 1261 to 1876, as the following inscriptions shew:—

"This room was built in 1908 for a memorial of William Arthur Strong, M.A., Vicar of Bradninch from 1876 to 1888, and of his wife Stephana Strong, by friends mindful of their earnest desire that the old schoolhouse should be made more useful for the education of the people in the principles of the Church of England."

"To the honoured memory of Edward Ernest Atherton, M.A., Curate-assistant of this parish, 1891-1902, this gallery is erected by his devoted friends."

In piam priscorum memoriam,
Qui,
Sive rectores, sive vicarii,
Huicce parochiae olim ministrabant,
Hodie ministrantis nepticulae,
Maia et Katharina,
Puellularum par carissimum et lepidissimum,
Hanc fenestram tabellis exornandam curaverunt.
MCMVIII.

A large proportion of the cost of the undertaking was borne by the friends of former officers of the borough and other residents, who, in placing memorial devices in the windows, contributed a sum of money sufficient to pay for the roof as well. The windows not only give refinement and distinction to the building, but are interesting as recalling the names of those who, in days gone by, were somebodies in Bradninch. I subjoin a list of them.

Two families are commemorated side by side in the window nearest the platform. The WARREN arms, granted 14th March, 1623, are: *Argent, three mascles sable between 2 bars counter-compony, or and azure, on a canton of the second 3 ducal crowns or within a bordure gules charged with eight besants.* The surrounding

inscription sets forth that the panel is "in memory of the Warrens of Bradninch since 1272," and is "erected by their descendants in the 20th, 21st, and 22nd generations." In the adjoining panel it is stated in similar wording that the NORMANS were also in Bradninch in 1272, but the monogram "*J.J.N.*" replaces the Warren arms, and "James John Norman of Exeter" is named as the donor.

The families of DREW and MATTHEWS occupy the next window. Around the Drew arms, *Ermine a lion passant gules*, are the words, "Given by members of the Drew family in memory of their ancestors in this parish," with the motto: *Drogo nomen et virtus arma dedit.* The adjoining inscription, "In memoriam the family of Matthews of Bradninch," surrounds their crest: *An eagle displayed sable.*

On the stairs, the scroll around a little religious subject—S. Anne teaching the Virgin—sets forth that it is "the gift of Elizabeth Squire," who was the last headmistress of the school, and next to it a stained glass panel, representing the building as it was before alteration, is the gift of pupils whom she had taught in it. The series of medallions in the upper windows begins at the south-west:—

1. REYNELL *Argent, masonry sable, a chief indented of the second*, with the inscription: "Richard Reynell, Recorder of Bradninch, 1604 to 1616." Motto: *Murus aheneus esto.*

2. SAINTHILL. *Or, on a fess engrailed azure between 3 leopards' faces gules 3 besants, each charged with a fleur-de-lys of the second, in chief a gusset of the second semée de lys of the field.* "Peter Sainthill 1632 to 1637, Samuel Sainthill 1661 to 1685, Recorders of Bradninch." Two mottoes: *Fin fait tout*, and *Deeds not words*.

3. SHAPCOTE. *Sable, a chevron or between 3 sheepcotes argent.* "Robert Shapcote, Recorder of Bradninch, 1647 to 1661."

4. THE EARL OF BATH. Arms of Grenville: *Gules, 3 clarions or*, surmounted by an earl's coronet and flanked by *two griffins or* as supporters. "The Rt. Hon. John, Earl of Bath, Recorder of Bradninch, 1685 to 1690." Motto: *Futurum invisibile.*

5. MARTYN. This shield, at the time of writing, is the subject of a correspondence with the College of Heralds. Pending its termination a blank pane of glass has been inserted in the escutcheon. "William Martyn, Recorder of Bradninch, 1700 to 1710."

6. PUTT. *Argent, within a mascle a lion rampant sable*, for Putt, impaling in chief Trevelyan: *Gules, issuant from barry wavy of six argent and azure a demi horse argent;* and in base, Prestwood: *sable between two flaunches a lion rampant or. On a canton the bloody hand of Ulster.* "Sir Thomas Putt, Baronet, Recorder of Bradninch, 1710 to 1721."

7. MANLEY. *Argent, a dexter hand couped and erect fingers extended sable.* "Edward Manley, Recorder of Bradninch, 1772 to 1785; and Henry Chorley Manley, Deputy Recorder."

8. MARKER. *Per pale argent and gules, a pale counterchanged.* "Richard John Marker, of Uffculme, Recorder of Bradninch, 1818 to 1855." Motto: *Festina lente.*

9. GIDLEY. *Or, within a bordure sable charged with 8 besants a castle of the second.* Motto: *Munit et alit.* "John Gidley, Recorder of Bradninch, 1855 to 1865."

10. DAW. No arms. Monogram "J.D." within a cartouche. "John Daw, last Recorder of Bradninch, 1865 to 1884."

11. MORTIMORE. *Barry of 6, or and azure, an inescutcheon argent; on a chief of the first a pale between 2 gyrons of the second.* "In Memoriam the Mortimores of Bradninch since 1561." Motto: *Vertutum avorum aemulus.*

12. MARTIN. *Argent, 3 pales gules, on a chief azure as many martlets of the field; on a canton of the second suspended from a knot an oval medal of the field bearing the arms of the East India Company.* "John Martin, Mayor of Bradninch, 1700."

13. DEWDNEY. No arms. Within a cartouche "*J.D., died 9th June, 1858. M.D., died 4th Decr., 1882.*" "In Memoriam, John and Mary Dewdney, of Hele Mills."

14. BESLEY. *Quarterly or and sable a bend gules*, impaling Land: *Ermine a cross chequy vert and argent, in the first quarter a lion passant sable.* "William Henry Besley, Mayor of Bradninch, 1860 and 1870." Motto: *Turris tutissima fides.*

15. WRIGHTON. No arms. The centre of medallion is occupied by a quaint subject composition representing a man seated in a pair of stocks and surrounded by a group of Borough Officials, Mayor, Town Clerk, Recorder, Sergeants-at-mace

in their robes, and constables with wands in their hands. The surrounding inscription sets forth that Thomas Edward Wrighton was Mayor of Bradninch in 1865 and 1877. It was during his first Mayoralty that he was the last magistrate in England to sentence a delinquent to the stocks,[1] and that interesting fact is thus placed permanently upon record. The returns of the riband with inscription bear the date of the event, Nov. 12th, 1866.

16. HEPBURN. *Gules, on a chevron argent a rose between two lions counterpassant of the field.* "Thomas Henry Hepburn, Mayor of Bradninch 1876 and 1882." Motto: *Keep Tryst.*

17. CUMING. *Quarterly, 1st and 4th azure, 3 garbs or: 2nd and 3rd argent 3 bends sable, each charged with as many roses of the field, barbed or.* "Charles Thomas Cuming, last Mayor of Bradninch, 1859, 1869, 1879, 1884, and 1885." Motto: *Courage.*

18. CLEEVE. *Argent, on a chevron sable, between 3 wolves' heads proper erazed, three mullets of the field.* "In memory of Frederick Abraham Cleeve, one of the founders of this school." Motto: Ανεχου Απεχου.

19. Vacant.

20. Vacant.

21. GREET. *Per pale dexter argent, within a bordure engrailed or, a saltire engrailed azure. Sinister or, a lion rampant, between 8 cross crosslets fitchée gules.* "In memory of Alexander and Emma Greet, erected by their children." Motto: *Taciturnitas et fidelitas.*

22. Vacant.

23. LYNE. C. J. L. "Presented by Caroline Lyne in memory of her husband James Lyne. They were master and mistress of this school, 1853 to 1855."

24. A simple cartouche with his name keeps alive the memory of "Ambrose Shere, Churchwarden of S. Disen's Church, 1863 to 1888."

25. BURROW. *Gules, on a bend engrailed or, 3 escutcheons azure;* impaling, *sable, on a chevron or, between 3 leopards' faces argent crowned of the second, 3 fleurs-de-lys of the field.* "Frederic Burrow, last Town Clerk of the Borough of Bradninch, 1872 to 1886."

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[1] See above, p. 143.

26. TUCKER. Arms of the Guild of Fullers, Weavers, Tuckers and Shearmen. *Per saltire, azure and gules, in fesse 2 shuttles filled palewise or, in chief a teazel, in base a pair of shears lying fess-ways argent, on a chief ermine a slea between 2 burling irons of the third.* "An offering from their three daughters in memory of James[1] and Elizabeth Tucker."

27. A monogram, "J.T.G.," is surrounded by the inscription, "In memoriam John T. Glover, presented by his wife and children."

28. DUNSFORD. *Azure, 3 beehives argent.* "A good name endureth for ever. Robert Dunsford, buried 9th April, 1566." Motto: *Forward.*

S. Disen's Church
from Church Lane

[1] James Tucker was a member of the guild.

CHAPTER VI

MISCELLANEA

IT remains to say a few words on the condition of the people at different times; to tell something of the industries of Bradninch; to mention a few persons who have been connected with the place; to put on record a few things that are worthy of note; and to indicate the general progress of the inhabitants.

THE CONDITION OF THE PEOPLE

It will help us to form a right judgment of our own happy lot as Bradninch men of the twentieth century if we briefly glance at some of the changes which have passed upon the general conditions of English life since the battle of Hastings.

Legal Penalties

Up to the time of the Norman conquest the law put men to death for what we should call trivial offences. It was the boast of the conqueror that he maintained 'the peace of holy church and of the land,' and gave justice without respect of persons to all his subjects, poor and rich alike.[1] His laws were a mitigation of those which had been thitherto in force. But the mitigation itself appears to us to be sheer savagery. Crimes formerly punished by death

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[1] "Le roy voit, que la peace de saint eglise, et de la terre, soit bien gard et maintegn' en touts points, et que common droiture soit fait a touts auxibien as povers, come as riches, sans regard de nulluy."—*Leg.* Will. I., *cf.* 1 Edw. III., cap. 1. 1.

were henceforward to be expiated by mutilation. And it was enacted, that instead of losing their heads, men were to have an eye plucked out, or a hand or foot cut off.[1] Under the forest-laws, which were in force throughout Devon until the days of king John, it must have been a common thing to meet in the streets of Bradninch poor fellows thus mercilessly maimed by the action of the law, because they had ventured to draw a bow or to keep a dog—victims not of war, nor of mischance, but of a system of justice claiming to be based on clemency.

Conditions of Labour

We have already seen[2] how under the manorial system everyone living on the land, from the lord to the serf, was supported by the land. When the villeins and cottagers had purchased their freedom from 'service,' and became wage-earners, it became more difficult every day to find a steady supply of men to till the fields, and the law stepped in to provide it. By this intervention the nascent freedom of the people was strangled. Even in the golden age of Elizabeth masters and labourers were not free to make their own agreements as to either wages or hours of work. Laws were passed obliging men to labour at a rate of wages fixed either by statute, or, as in the case of Bradninch, by order of the mayor under the statute. If a master were convicted of giving higher wages, he was fined £5, and was imprisoned ten days without bail; while the man who took higher wages was imprisoned twenty-one days without bail. The wages thus rigidly fixed were often quite insufficient to support life. As to the hours of work the law was:—

> "That all Artificers and Labourers, being hired for wages by the day or week, shall betwixt the midst of the months of *March* and *September*, be and continue at their work at

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[1] "Interdicimus nequis occidatur vel suspendatur pro aliqua culpa, sed eruantur Oculi, abscindantur Pedes, vel Testiculi, vel Manus."—*Leg.* Will. I., cap. 7.

[2] See above, pp. 62-73.

> or before five of the clock in the morning, and continue at work, and not depart, until betwixt seven and eight of the clock at night (except it be in the time of breakfast, dinner, or drinking, the which times at the most shall not exceed above two hours and a half in a day, that is to say, at every drinking one half hour, for his dinner one hour, and for his sleep when he is allowed to sleep, the which is from the midst of *May* to the midst of *August*, half an hour at the most, and at every breakfast one half hour). And all the said Artificers and Labourers, between the midst of *September*, and the midst of *March*, shall be and continue at their work from the spring of the day in the morning, until the night of the same day, except it be in time afore appointed for breakfast and dinner, upon pain to lose and forfeit one peny for every hour's absence, to be deducted and defaulked out of his wages that shall so offend."[1]

Tradesmen lived under like bondage. Prices were fixed by law subject to heavy penalties, and if butchers or brewers attempted to raise the price, they were liable for the first offence to forfeit ten pounds, or to be imprisoned for twenty days 'with bread and water.' For the second offence the fine was twenty pounds, with the alternative of standing in the pillory; and for the third it was "Forty pounds, pillory, and ears."[2] A man's elementary liberty to work for whom he pleases, and to buy and sell according to his own view of his interest, was unknown in the land.

The Old Poor Law

The state, in fixing a rate of wages which was insufficient to enable the wage-earner to procure a livelihood, assumed the responsibility of keeping him from starvation. In the fourteenth century an act was passed which divided the poor into two classes, 'beggars able to labour,' and 'beggars impotent to serve.'[3] To the man who was too feeble to work the law gave a licence to become a public beggar, and thus to live on the alms of the charitable. Every man 'able to labour' between twelve and sixty

[1] 5 Eliz., cap. 4. [2] 2 & 3 Edw. VI., cap. 15.
[3] 12 Richard II., cap. 7.

years of age who was not otherwise employed was compelled 'to serve in husbandry' by the year, within the shire in which he was settled.[1] If anything more than his earnings was necessary to keep him alive, then appeal was to be made to the voluntary contributions of the community; and if charity did not suffice, a rate was to be raised to make up the deficiency. The appeal to charity was at first not made in vain. The free-will offerings of the people amply supplied, according to the notions of the time, the wants of the sick and needy. The wedding and the funeral alike furnished occasion for feeding the hungry, and all the greater church festivals were, as the name implies, days of feasting, when the poor were bountifully remembered. In larger towns the trade guilds did much to supply the needs of the more dependent part of the community. And we may take it for granted that the cordwainers of Bradninch, the only local guild of which any record survives, made provision according to their means for the guild-members and for those dependent on them, their wives, their children, their servants, and their apprentices. Their sons were started in life, their daughters portioned, and their widows pensioned.

Strictly interpreted, the poor-law provided, in the words of the statute, 'only necessary relief.' But in practice it was held to apply not only to the destitute, but to all those whose slender means caused them to be spoken of as 'the poor.' The adoption of this interpretation gradually dried up the fount of charity.

It was an essential part of the old poor-law system that the population should be settled in townships and parishes. This policy of our legislature continued for more than two hundred and fifty years, until at length, if any able-bodied man was found wandering from his parish and refusing to work he was branded on the shoulder with an 'R,' to denote that he was a 'rogue,

[1] 5 Eliz., cap. 4.

vagabond, or sturdy beggar,' and given into a term of bondage to anyone who would take him. An honest man who desired to move was not allowed to pass the boundary into another parish or county until he had furnished himself with a permit[1] from the mayor.

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[1] It is interesting to read a copy of an actual permit under which a sailor named Rice made his way from Plymouth to my brother's parish in Essex. It is printed in common form. What is filled in by hand I print in italics :—

"DEVON
Burrough of Plymouth } To all Constables, and other His Majesty's Officers, whom it may concern, THESE,

Seal

Permit and suffer the Bearer hereof *William Rice a poor Seaman who was Lately discharged from His Majesty's Employ, being rendered Uncapable of Service* . . . quietly and peaceably to travel and pass from hence to *the Parish of Ugley in the County of Essex, he* demeaning *himself* . . . . according to Law, and *making no delays on his Journey*. . . . Given under my Hand and Seal at Plymouth, aforesaid the *fifteenth day of March, 1760*

Jas. Richardson mayor

Dorset Borough of Dorchester } *21 March 1760 all^d to pass this Borough*
George Cooper—Mayor *Relieved at Dorchester by Nichs. Stickland Treas.*
1760 Blandford Borrough Marh 22
Allowed to pass Wm. Bastard Dep. Bailiff
City of New Sarum
Relievd 23rd Mar. 1760 In. Davis
City of Winton 24 March 1760 permit the bearer to pass this city. Will Prior
Relievd at Alton March 25
Surrey allowd to pass this County March 26, 1760 G. Woodroffe.
Relievd at Croydon by J. Moys one shilling Mar 28th
Releivd at Lewisham by J. Whiffin Six Pence Mar 29
Essex allowd to pass this County March 31, 1760
Crisfr. Gascoyne
31 march Relivd att Illford with 3d. Fred Hall
Wanstead Esex 0 . 0 . 6
Woodford 0 . 0 . 6."

The policy of withholding a living wage from the labourer and assessing a poor-rate in aid to keep him from starvation was fraught with social disaster. The whole system, vicious from the beginning, was often so administered as to produce needless mischief. We learn from the preamble of an act of parliament passed in 1674[1] "for the preventing the perishing of any of the Poor, whether young or old, for want of such supplies as are necessary," that many had been forced "to turn incorrigible rogues, and others to perish for want," and also that "the continual increase of the Poor" . . . had become "very great and exceeding burthensome."

The local officers of the law exerted themselves to the uttermost to keep down the rates. An extant document, bearing date 3rd day of September, 1716, shews that two men, who are named, "intruded themselves into our parish without any sufficient testimonial, contrary to the law in that case made." The churchwardens and overseers lodged a complaint, the justices issued a summons requiring them to appear at the guildhall of Bradninch "to shew cause why the said persons should be settled on the said parish." But no carefulness on the part of justices, churchwardens, and overseers could keep the rates from growing. And in times of distress they seemed to increase by leaps and bounds.

In the year 1776/7, fifteen rates were levied in Bradninch, and the total sum given to the poor amounted to £404 3*s*. 10½*d*. In 1787/8—the year in which Simpson tells us the rates were 7*s*. in the £1[2]—eighteen rates were levied, and the sum for the poor was £463 2*s*. In 1801/2 they had reached the highest point with forty-one rates. The sum given to the poor was £1,047 4*s*. 3*d*.; and there was a loss of £127 1*s*. 8½*d*.

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[1] 13 & 14 Car. II., cap. 12.

[2] Simpson tells us that in 1788, when the rates were 7*s*. in the £1 in Bradninch, they ranged in Cullompton and elsewhere from 12*s*. to 20*s*. in the £1.

"sustained in purchasing Corn and Fish for the Poor, and selling the same at a reduced price." Only once during the next eighteen years did the dole for the poor fall below £700. In 1813/4 it was £998 9*s.* 0¼*d.*, and in 1818/9 it was £978 19*s.* 6*d.* At the beginning of the century it was calculated that 28 per cent.—more than one in four of the whole population—were in receipt of permanent or occasional relief.

The old poor-law system, it may be said, was the means of making the English labourer, until its reform in 1834, "a settled landless serf, supported by a fixed wage and a state bounty." From the character of such an one all sense of personal independence was wholly banished. The people were pauperized, and a large part of the community had lost all self-respect.

The lot of the man who depends for his livelihood on the labour of his hands is still far indeed from being what we all desire it to be. But at least his position is now very different from what it was before 1834. Since the passing of the poor-law amendment act in that year, the condition of the people in respect of pauperism shews wonderful improvement, at first fitfully, and since the sixth decade with growing steadiness. In 1859 the paupers were 41.8 per thousand; in 1905 they had fallen to 22.6 per thousand of the total population.

INDUSTRIES

Agriculture

Of Agriculture, the first industry of the people, I cannot attempt to write anything like a systematic account. It must content me to give a few points which are likely to interest the farmer of the twentieth century.

All the ploughland of the manor was divided, as we have seen,[1] into three open fields. And this continued up to the time of queen Anne. Indeed, it was not until after her time that the enclosure acts passed

[1] See p. 63.

under which the country was divided by permanent fences into the fields which we have to-day.

In early times the only animal used for ploughing was the ox. When four, or sometimes even as many as eight yoke of oxen were needed to drag the plough, it often became necessary for the villeins to join forces in ploughing the land. A code of laws coming down from the tenth century shews us how this co-operation was managed. The co-partners brought each his contribution of oxen, or of plough-irons. One of them was appointed ploughman. The strips were assigned as follows :—

> "The first acre ploughed was to go to the ploughman, the second to the irons, the third to the outside sod ox, the fourth to the outside sward ox, the fifth to the driver, the sixth, seventh, eighth, ninth, tenth, and eleventh to the other six oxen in order of worth; and lastly the twelfth was the plough-acre for plough-bote—for maintenance of the wood of the plough." [1]

Linces

The open field was divided into long narrow strips of an acre apiece. These strips were separated from each other by baulks of turf, two furrows wide. Steep places were ploughed, not up-and-down-hill, but horizontally across the face of the hill, and the sod was always turned towards the valley. As the baulks between the strips were never ploughed, the result was that in process of ages the hill-sides were converted into a series of long narrow terraces, the upper side of which was poor sub-soil, while the lower side was rich and unexhausted. These artificial terraces, known as 'linces,' still remain in many places throughout the country. While I write I can see from my window plainly marked traces of them in the peculiar growth of the corn in a field whose name is 'hilly,' which is now in occupation of Mr. Frederick Cuming. The 'linces' themselves have been thoroughly obliterated

[1] *The Manor*, p. 52.

by cross-ploughing down-hill, but their mark has been so indelibly stamped on the land that, under certain conditions of tillage, it is impossible not to be struck by it. If I did not know from my own careful inspection that they have been completely levelled by the plough, I should have said many times during the last fortnight that the terraces must still be there. Their position, and especially the sweep of the plough, as it turned at the north end of the furrow, has been much more

The 'linces' in 'hilly' as seen 15th July, 1909

regularly defined by the growth of the corn in the field than appears in the pen-and-ink drawing.

Long after the common fields had been broken up, and the 'linces' had been levelled, it continued to be customary to plough such land across the hill. This had the effect of denuding the top of the hill, and heaping up the soil—'the forwards,' as it was technically named—at the bottom of it. Hence it became necessary at intervals to transport 'the forwards' to the higher ground which had been laid bare.

This operation was accomplished by means of a somewhat rude, but very simple and efficient tricycle,

called 'a three-wheeled butt.' The wheels were solid discs about eighteen inches in diameter. The chain by which it was drawn was so attached that the horse, by the mere act of turning when he reached the top of the field, upset the load. The same chain was then hooked to the front wheel in such a way as to convert it into an unfailing brake for the downhill journey. It is said to have been 'a very handy thing.'

A three-wheeled Butt

It was in the form of this three-wheeled butt that wheel traffic first came into use on the land. Simpson notes that "the carriage of hay and manure is done in this country upon horses' backs." Corn was not carried from the harvest field in waggons as it is to-day. It was carried on a horse's back by means of a pack-saddle and crooks. And I am told that in this way a smart man with a good horse would bring in a field of corn in the day.

Pack Saddle and Crooks

A primitive device was used for distributing the dressing over the land. Two large wooden buckets furnished with hinged bottoms were slung across a horse's back. These were filled with farmyard manure, and on the withdrawal of a pin the load fell on the ground. This apparatus was very popular with the children, to whom it was a great delight to be allowed to ride back to the farmyard in the empty drums. The ride, however, did not always prove the joy that it was expected to be. For tradition states that it was a favourite trick of the youth in charge to withdraw the pin when crossing the river, and to let the child fall into the water. The horse was often put in charge of boys. I have heard a story of a diminutive young hopeful who turned his horse across the hill, emptied without difficulty the bucket which was towards the high ground; but when he tried to discharge the load that was towards the valley, the pin was too high for him to move it. He struggled with

Dung-pots

his task so long, that his father, fearing that something untoward must have happened, came to seek him. When he reached the field he found the child in a flood of tears. But the tears were soon dried by the sunshine which suddenly burst forth, when his father shewed him that, by turning the horse to the right about, he could empty the second pot as easily as the first. Pot is the right word to use; for these receptacles which I have called buckets, or drums, were spoken of, in the vulgar tongue, as 'dung-pots.'

Some of the most important implements of agriculture which are now to be found on every farm came into use at a much later date than some of us suppose. I do not speak of the modern machines now in use for sowing, mowing, reaping, raking and threshing. I refer to implements of much more common type, to such things as ploughs, and carts and waggons. I have spoken to many men still alive who have made, not only wooden ploughs with oaken mould boards,[1] but wooden cart-axles as well. The thick oaken axle had nailed to it on the lower side a small plate of iron, which bore the load against an iron ring inserted into the massive hub of the wheel.

Simpson tells us that Bradninch suffered so much in the early part of the eighteenth century from "the local character of the land, and the general decay of trade" that "many of the estates were considered in the renewals as of less value than they were in the time of the parliamentary survey." At "the last renewals"—of which he does not give the date—the sum total at which the manor was valued was £100 a year lower than it had been in 1650. But there had been a great improvement before 1788, when he made his survey. He says :—

> "Some of the farms are consolidated. A great many acres of Furze are grubbed up, and the wet parts have

[1] The very term is reminiscent of the wooden plough.

> been drained, so that the rents are now advanced more than £500 a year above the Parliamentary Survey. . . . These Improvements are principally owing to the *Industry* of the Tenants."

Some of Simpson's remarks upon the character of the land and the methods of its culture are interesting. He says:—"The land generally is easy of tillage. . . . Wheat sown in bottoms is seven or eight pecks to an acre; on the hills ten pecks. Crops upon low lands: wheat 20 to 32 bushels per statute acre; barley 30 to 40 bushels; oats (seldom sown in good land) about 40 bushels." Speaking of the succession of crops he says: "The usual custom is to lime for Turneps put in at midsummer, then take Wheat, Barley and Grass two years, then Turneps and Wheat again, etc. . . . Turneps are often taken on wheat arrish.[1] The grass or summer-field is broken in February in the second year, and turneps are harrowed in at midsummer. . . . They never hoe their Turneps, and yet I never saw better—if they come up too thick they only harrow them well, while in this early state."

Wool

The arts of spinning and weaving were first introduced into this country by the Romans. And it is quite possible that from that time onwards till the beginning of last century Bradninch may have had a succession of more or less expert spinsters and weavers. There is, however, no mention in 'Domesday Book' of fulling-mills in Devon. And it is certain that in the manufacture of wool England lagged for a long time behind the continent. Before the close of the thirteenth century steps were taken to enable the English to learn from the more skilful craftsmen abroad. Edward I. granted charters to foreigners to settle in England. This gave a stimulus to the trade, and cloth

[1] *I.e.*, stubble.

was made at Exeter. But Dartmoor wool still continued to be sent out of the country, to be re-imported into England as cloth spun and woven in other lands. In the fourteenth century the aid of parliament was invoked to promote home production. In order to check foreign competition it was declared by statute, in 1337, "to be felony to carry any wool out of the Realm";[1] it was enacted that none should "wear any Cloth, but such as is made in England";[2] that "no Cloths made beyond the Sea should be brought into the King's Dominions;"[3] and, in order to improve the standard of production in this country, the act declares:—

> "*Item*, It is accorded, That all Cloth-workers of strange lands, of whatsoever Country they be, which will come into England, Ireland, Wales, and Scotland, within the King's power, shall come safely and surely, and shall be in the King's protection and safe conduct, to dwell in the same lands, chusing where they will. (2) And to the intent the said Cloth-workers shall have the greater will to come and dwell here, our Sovereign Lord the King will grant them Franchises as many and such as may suffice them."[4]

In later times skilled artisans, driven by troubles and persecutions from Flanders, Holland, and France, took refuge on our shores, and in return for our hospitality handed over to us their higher knowledge and skill. Dr. Toulmin says:—

> "It was judged best, in order to diffuse the benefit of their art over the kingdom, to disperse them into different and remote counties, that they might establish in each different manufactures."

And he tells us that while cotton was set up in Manchester, kerseys were made the staple of Devonshire.[5]

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[1] 11 Edwd. III., cap. 1. [2] *Ib.*, cap. 2. [3] *Ib.*, cap. 3. [4] *Ib.*, cap. 4.
[5] *Hist. of Taunton*, p. 95. A glance at the names in the early lists of householders in Bradninch (see above, pp. 96-100), will shew that a large number of foreigners settled here.

The woollen manufacture of the west was in a highly flourishing condition at the beginning of the eighteenth century. At Tiverton, its chief centre, it seems to have reached its highest point about 1730, when fifty-six fulling mills were in full work. Devon had fairly earned her high position. Her trade had been an honest trade. From first to last, at every step in the process of production, good work had been bestowed upon good material. The result had been a growing demand for her cloths. The trade with the Levant had become practically the monopoly of Devon. Its woollen goods were largely used a little more than two hundred years ago in many of the countries of Europe. Its looms were everywhere in full work, and Bradninch participated in the general prosperity of the trade of the country. Indeed, the wool industry was always very strongly represented here. There is evidence that in early times the township desired to be in the forefront in growing the best, *i.e.*, the whitest wool. It is on record that in 1461 the reeve kept a white ram with the flock.

Westcote, speaking of the progress of the woollen manufactures, observes:—

> "The gentleman-farmer, or husbandman, sends his wool to market, which is bought either by the comber or spinner; and they the next week bring it again in yarn, which the weavers buy; and the market following bring it thither again in cloth, when it is sold either to the clothier (who sends it to London) or to the merchant, who (after it hath passed the fuller's mill, and sometimes the dyer's vat) transports it."

All these—the wool-grower, the comber,[1] the spinner, the weaver, the fuller, and the dyer—were found here.

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[1] In early times the 'short' inferior wool was carefully separated from the 'long.' The lumps of the 'short' wool were torn asunder, and made up into light open rolls ready to be spun into thread. This was the work of the wool-carder. To prepare the 'long' wool for spinning was the work of the wool-comber.

The courts behind Comfort Cottage, and at the foot of Cullompton Hill, are probably remains of this whilom flourishing trade. These courts have all one common characteristic. They have no thoroughfare. They are approached from the street. The dwellings which compose them have no back doors. It is a method of building which is not peculiar to Bradninch. The same arrangement is found at Tiverton, at Cullompton, and probably in many other west-country towns. It grew, according to a report made after an inquiry at Tiverton in 1850, out of the requirements of the old staple manufacture of the place. The master manufacturer surrounded his residence with the dwellings and workshops of the artisans in his employ, leaving a central court, or square, for the purpose of carrying on the process called 'warping the chain,'[1] which required space, and was necessarily performed in the open air. As the woollen manufacture died out in Bradninch, these court factories were converted into independent dwellings.

The speciality of the woollen trade of Bradninch was in the manufacture of duroy cloth.[2] In this it excelled, and did at one time a very considerable trade in it.

At Northdown — familiarly called Nordon — was a leather-mill, about which I have learned no more than that it existed. The lease of this leather-mill, together with about fifty acres of land, was bought, about the year 1795, by Mr. William Upcott, woollen manufacturer and export merchant. He and his successors converted it into a woollen factory, and held it from the duchy of Cornwall, till about 1858, when its existence as a woollen mill was brought to an end, by the

[1] The 'chain' is the name given to the sum of the long threads which run the length of a piece of cloth. The courtyards were used for laying out the threads in order to combine those of the same length in different chains. This process, I am told, was known as 'warping the chain.'

[2] SIMPSON.

removal of the machinery to Cullompton. In 1824 or 1825 the mill was burnt down. But Mr. William Upcott, son of the first lessee, rebuilt it, introducing many important improvements. In this mill all the processes for converting the fleece into cloth were carried on, combing, spinning, and weaving. When the 'spinning jenny' came into use it found a home in Nordon mill. But there were never any power looms there. During its long tenure by three generations of Upcotts, this mill gave profitable employment to a considerable number of workpeople. The annual amount paid in wages was about £3,000.

At last evil times fell upon the industry in the west. Fashion decreed the use of a finer make of goods, which early in the eighteenth century was put on the markets from Norwich, so that the coarser goods of Devon were no longer in demand. And when the country entered upon the disastrous era of the Georgian wars, when its trade with Holland, its best customer, was destroyed by the blockade of the Dutch ports, the climax was reached. The industry rapidly declined,[1] and it was finally ruined beyond recovery.

Unhappily less honourable causes began to operate. And the preamble of "an Act for the true making of Woollen Cloth" helps us to understand how the trade was so irretrievably lost. From it we learn that "some out of extreme coveteousness" did "daily more and more study rather to make many than to make good cloths." They had "more respect to their private commodity and gain, than the advancement of truth, and continuance of the commodity in estimation according to the worthiness thereof." Instead of truth they daily practised falsehood. And "instead of substantial making

[1] The Crimean war gave a momentary stimulus to the languishing manufacture of kersie, which was used for the charging of the muzzle-loader gun. The government was out of stores, and was obliged to have what it wanted at manufacturers' prices.

of cloth," they did "practise sleight and slender making, some by mingling of Yarn of divers spinnings in one Cloth, some by mingling Fell-wool, and Lambs-wool, or either of them, with Fleece-wool, some by putting too little Stuff, some by taking them out of the Mill before they be full thicked, some by overstretching them upon the Tentor, and then stopping with Flocks such bracks as were made by means thereof." By the use of "so many subtile sleights and untruths" it happened that "when the Clothes so made be put in water to try them, they rise out of the same neither in length nor breadth as they ought to do, and in some place narrower than some, beside such cockeling, bandoning, and divers other great and notable faults, as almost cannot be thought to be true."

The mere fact that language like this could find its way into an act of parliament is itself the strongest proof that the woollen trade throughout the land had brought upon itself most serious damage. If the goose that laid the golden eggs was not already killed, in the west country at least the process of bleeding her to death had already advanced so far that nothing save the most favourable conditions could have put a stop to it.

To these causes which severally contributed to the decline of the trade in the west of England generally, others must be added which did especial damage to the trade of Bradninch in particular. In the struggle for existence it is the weakest who suffer first and most. And certain it is that before the close of the eighteenth century those who were most interested in the well-being of our town were lamenting her silent looms, her high poor-rates, her unemployed labourers, and her departed glory as a seat of manufacture.

She probably suffered, as Tiverton did, from "the bitter dissensions between the master and the man on the subject of Irish worsted." The serge factory at Wellington, established in 1761, may have drawn away some of the Bradninch operatives. Under the pressure

of the struggle for existence the woollen manufacturers of the town began to remove their business and their factories to Cullompton and to Exeter. Speculating as to whether this migratory movement from Bradninch was only a symptom of a transient unrest, or likely to become a permanent drain upon its commercial life, Davis, in 1802, concludes that Exeter, from its better communication with foreign lands, is bound to become more and more a place of commercial importance which must have growing attraction for Bradninch men, while "to those who would wish to preserve the trade of the country near the hands used to it rather than carry it to Exeter, Cullompton will present itself as a more desirable residence."[1]

When the trade of the west of England was thus assailed, it was above all things expedient that capital and labour should heartily unite to avert disaster. But unfortunately labour did not understand this, and believing that their sore straits were due to the greed of capital, the mill-workers made their position worse by inopportune efforts to improve it. In the year 1717 the journals of the house of commons contain evidence of the existence of widespread combination of the woollen workers in Devonshire. The mayor and corporation of Bradninch complain in that year "that for some years past the wool-combers and weavers in these parts have been confederating how to incorporate themselves into a club; and have, to the number of some thousands in this county, in a very riotous and tumultuous manner, exacted tribute from many."[2]

The last weaver in Bradninch was a man named William Tucker who lived in the first cottage on the right as you go up Cullompton Hill. He died about 1855.

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[1] *Supplement to Simpson's Survey*, 1802.

[2] *House of Commons Journals*, Vol. XVIII., p. 715, 5th February, 1717.

Lace

It is a matter of legend rather than of history that bobbin lace was introduced into England by Dutch refugees somewhere about 1568. The earliest mention of the famous Devonshire lace is in 1630, by Westcote, who, in his *View of Devon*, speaking of the industries of different localities, says:—

> "At Honiton and Bradnidge . . . you may be furnished . . . with bone lace, much in request." [1]

In 1698 a petition was sent up to the house of commons protesting against a proposal to take off the duty on foreign lace.[2] The lace-makers of Devon, Dorset, and Bucks feared for the result on their industry. It was stated that in Honiton alone 1,341 women made their living by lace-making. The bobbin net used as the foundation for the Honiton lace was extremely costly. It was made in strips two inches wide of Flanders thread, costing as much as £90 a pound. This net was paid for in a curious way. The worker laid it on the counter, and received in payment as many shillings as would cover it. This was for the ground alone. The finished lace is quoted in the petition of 1698 as worth six pounds a yard.[3] The women in Bradninch worked at the lace in their own homes, and in the summer could be seen sitting on their doorsteps with the pillow on the lap deftly tossing the bobbins to and fro. Sharpened fish-bones were used instead of pins in olden days, pins being so costly as to be beyond the dreams of old-time lace-workers. The industry has long been in abeyance. But it is hoped that under the encouragement of the lately-formed Arts and Crafts Association it will be to some extent revived.

I have already stated what I have been able to glean

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[1] See also p. 61, *Mag. Brit.*, p. cccv.
[2] Moore, *The Lace Book*, p. 563.
[3] *Ib.*, pp. 180, 187.

relating to the earlier history of the mills at Kensham.[1]

Kensham Mills

The court roll shews that, at the end of the eighteenth century, John Podger and William Sharland held the lower Kensham mill with 7 acres 1 r. and 3 p., at a rent of £1 3*s.* 1*d.*[2]

In consequence of the decay of the woollen trade the fulling mill at lower Kensham was converted into a paper mill. A part of the manor grist mill at upper Kensham also became a paper mill. These transformations had taken place before the date of Simpson's survey in 1788. He reports that "only the common shop-papers are made in these mills," and that "both answer extremely well."

In 1804 the first modern building for the manufacture of paper at the upper mill and the house adjoining were erected by a Mr. Smith, who ruined himself in building them. He was followed by a Mr. Rossiter, and a Mr. Pim, who seem to have fared no better.

About the year 1810, Mr. John Matthews, of Bridge mill,[3] in the parish of Broadclyst, settled in this parish to carry on the manufacture of paper at the lower Kensham mill. He lived in the dwelling house attached to that mill. Shortly afterwards, with the assistance of his son William, who lived in London, he took over the lease of the upper mill. The business was conducted for a time in his own name. Afterwards he took into active partnership his youngest son, Charles Matthews. When he died, in 1841, he left his interest in Bridge mill to his eldest son John, father of the late prebendary Matthews. And Charles Matthews now worked both mills at Kensham, renting the upper mill from his

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[1] See above, pp. 43, 92.

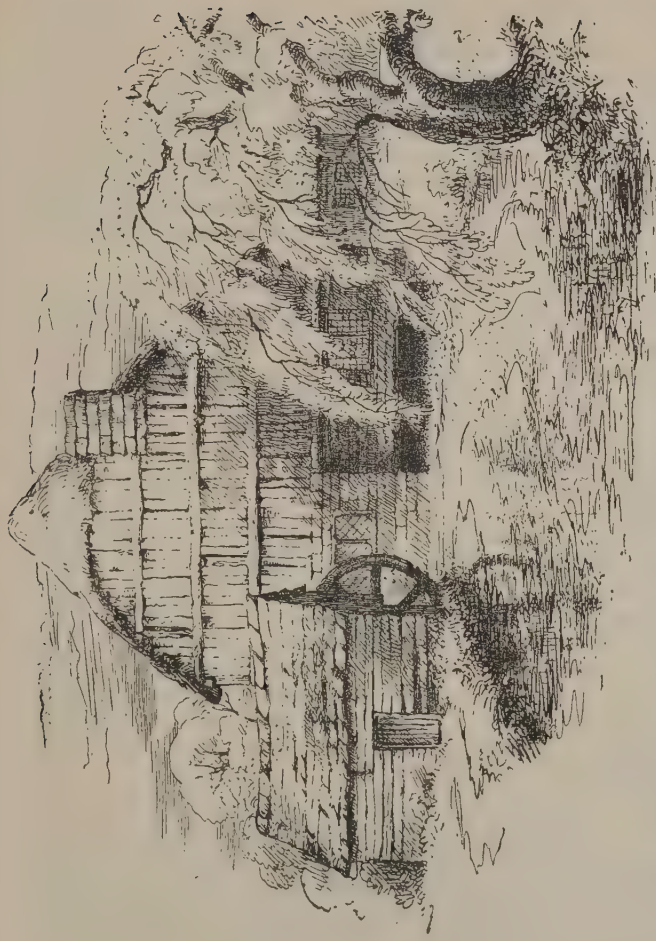
[2] In 1564, Peter Sainthill paid, as rent for the 'Kentisham,' or 'Keinsham' mills 'about six pounds,' when their yield to him was £110 per annum. In 1788 the annual value of this holding was put down at £30; and in 1802 it was entered at £45, "the land only" at that date being valued at £15.

[3] Mr. John Matthews built the dwelling house at Bridge mill.

brother William. With Mr. William Drew, first as his manager, and later as his partner, he held both mills for some fifteen years, living at Kensham. About 1856 he retired, and went to live at Earlsland, retaining, however, an interest both in the Kensham mills and in the Bridge mill, where the business was carried on under the name of Matthews, Martin & Co. The entire management of the Kensham mills now came into the hands of Mr. William Drew, who had been brought up from a boy in the paper business at Bridge, and who married Helen, only child of Mr. William Matthews. He erected new buildings at the upper mill, and added greatly to its productive power. Under him the mills reached their highest prosperity. Mr. Drew entered into partnership for a short time with Mr. Charles Thomas Cuming, the lessee of Park farm. And when the partnership was dissolved, Mr. Drew retained the upper, and Mr. Cuming had the lower mill. Mr. Charles Matthews died 26th March, 1873, and Mr. William Drew died 13th May, 1875. Then his brother, Mr. John Matthews Drew, came from London to work both the upper Kensham mill and the mill at Bridge[1]—a great undertaking even for an experienced man—and unfortunately he had no knowledge of paper-making. The result was disastrous. He made lavish expenditure on unproductive improvements at Bridge, and he soon lost both his own money and his brother's as well. After this both the upper and the lower mills were worked by Mr. Cuming until 1884 or 1885, when the business was turned into a company, C. T. Cuming and Son, Limited.

In the later years of their existence the mills suffered badly from a series of fires. Between 1 and 2 a.m. on Sunday morning, the 20th of December, 1874, the

[1] John Matthews Drew rented the Bridge mill from his uncle, John Matthews, and afterwards from his cousin, prebendary Matthews.



The old Fulling Mill at Lower Kensham, from a pencil drawing in possession of Miss Emma Pitts

foreman, George Pitts, who lived in Millway, was wakened from sleep by the alarm of fire at the lower mill. The old fulling mill—then converted into a boiler-house and engine-house—was burnt to the ground.[1] This combustible structure was connected with the dwelling-house in which Mr. Cuming lived. But John Glover and George Pitts sawed away the communicating timber, and the house was saved. The loss was put down at £3,000. A modern brick building, with lofty chimney-stack and up-to-date machinery, soon replaced the antiquated fulling-mill.

On Sunday, the 9th of March, 1890, when the people were assembled in church for evening service, at 6.30 p.m., a breathless messenger called Mr. Cuming from church, saying that a fire had broken out in the dwelling-house at the lower mill. The fire spread to the stores, but it was extinguished before it had time to do much injury to the mill. The damage done by the fire was estimated at £1,000. And business at the lower mill came to an end.

A still more destructive fire occurred on Sunday, the 21st November, 1892. When retiring for the night Mr. Cuming saw from his bedroom window flames rising from the roof of the engine-house of the upper mill. He at once gave the alarm. The smith's shop which stood apart to the west, and Mrs. Drew's house adjoining on the east, but separated from the burning pile by an eighteen-inch brick wall, alone escaped destruction. The damage was estimated at £5,000. The mill was never rebuilt.

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[1] At this fire James Melhuish, who had retired from the army with a pension at the age of forty, stood for some hours up to the waist in water, handing up buckets to men on the bank. The exposure cost him his life. He was buried on the 3rd January, 1875, a pensioner who never received a pension. If he had lived three hours longer, the payment for the first quarter would have been made to his representatives. As it was they are said to have received nothing.

Sixteen years later, the lease of the premises having expired in the meantime, the Bradninch and District Electric Lighting Company, Limited, was formed, to take over the water-power which had been running to waste, for the purpose of lighting the town. The light was first switched on on Monday, the 7th of December, 1908.

Hele Mills

I have not been able to discover anything which throws light upon the early history of the Hele mills. The first thing that we know of them is that in the eighteenth century the fall of water at Hele was used to drive three grist, or flour mills, the freehold property of Francis Gwyn (a descendant of the celebrated Nell Gwyn), of Forde Abbey. At a date which is not known, Francis Gwyn leased these three mills to one Edward Collins, of Topsham, for thirty years at the yearly rent of £19. This Edward Collins was the first to manufacture paper at Hele. He converted part of the grist mills for that purpose. And that is all we know of the paper industry at Hele under the man who established it.

On the 25th of March, 1767, Collins transferred all his interest in the undertaking to Abraham Elliott, of Bradninch, tanner. Elliott did not lease the mills himself. He gave a lease of the grist mills to Richard Morgan, of Bradninch, mill-wright, who immediately sublet them to Ferdinando Mills; and he let the paper mill to Charles Warren, of Bradninch, paper-maker. Six months after he had acquired the transfer of Collins' lease, that is to say, on the 23rd of September, 1767, Elliott obtained from Francis Gwyn a lease of the premises "during and unto the full end of 99 years," to run from the date of the death of Edward Collins, at the yearly rent of £2 7*s.* 9*d.*, to begin at the same date.

On the 19th of April, 1770, Elliott sold his long interest in the mills to William Matthews, the younger, of Huxham, and Thomas Dewdney, of Newton St. Cyres, both of them paper manufacturers, for the sum of £320.

These two gentlemen worked the mills in partnership until 1783. The partnership was then dissolved. William Matthews went to Bridge mills, in the parish of Broad Clyst, and Thomas Dewdney worked Hele mills by himself until his death in 1786. The business now came into the hands of his son, John Dewdney. In 1797 this gentleman obtained a fresh lease of the premises from the lord of the manor, and in 1817 he purchased the freehold.

On the 26th June, 1821, the Hele Mills were burnt to

Hele Mills about 1822

the ground. The wind was blowing with such force that it carried half-consumed sheets of paper before it for a great distance. Mrs. Mundy, a worker in the mill from September, 1838, to June, 1903, used to tell how her mother, working in a hay-field at Rewe, five miles away, picked up some of them, and learned from the watermark on the charred paper that the mill was ablaze which was to give her daughter employment for sixty-five years, and a pension to the day of her death in 1905.[1]

The accompanying print taken from a contemporary drawing now in possession of the Hele Paper Company

[1] Mrs. Mundy's record of long service was broken by Mrs. Rabjohns, who worked at the mill from September, 1838, till July, 1907.

represents the mills as rebuilt by Mr. Dewdney after this fire. Having no family Mr. Dewdney adopted his nephew, John Dewdney, and about the year 1823 he took him into partnership. The new firm which carried on its business under the title of 'I. & I. Dewdney,' introduced for the first time at Hele the manufacture of paper by machinery. They erected a machine driven by a water-wheel for the production of fine writing-paper in continuous lengths.

In 1837, by the death of his uncle, John Dewdney the younger came into possession of this valuable property. And now began a period of great activity. His first object was to secure a sufficient supply of water suitable for the production of the best paper. Having spent considerable sums in fruitless boring on his own land, he struck at last, about 1840, an abundant supply of a peculiarly good water near by, on land which has since been acquired by the company. This excellent water is a main element in the successful production of high-class paper. The business soon outgrew the supply of power which the Culm could furnish. So the aid of steam was called in. First one engine came, and then another, and then what was in those days a large, powerful steam-engine by Easton & Amos. About the year 1841 or 1842, Dewdney substituted a powerful turbine for the old water-wheel. A few years later he lighted the place with gas. He also added a new machine for the production of very fine paper, thence-forward using the old one to make coloured paper, while the vats were still kept at work for various sorts of hand-made paper. He also built a small village for his workmen, and established a free day-school for their children.

In this period of activity at Hele an event took place which had an important bearing upon the paper industry. The section of the Great Western line, which was then called the Bristol and Exeter Railway, was opened for traffic on the 1st May, 1844. As it was a

day greatly to be remembered, there was much rejoicing at Hele. Up to that date the produce of all the paper-mills in the neighbourhood had been carted to Topsham, to be conveyed by sea to London.

It has been my duty to chronicle the fact that Bradninch has been the last place in England to do so many things, that it is a pleasure to record that Bradninch was the first place to do something highly important, which all the world is now doing everywhere. It was at Hele Mills that writing-paper was first glazed. John Dewdney devised, and put into use, a process which as yet no other manufacturer had learned to employ. What he did was, like so many other inventions of the highest importance, extremely simple. He placed a sheet of paper between plates of copper, and passed it through a pair of iron rollers under great pressure. This process imparted to the paper that peculiar glossy finish which everyone now knows so well. For a long time the cunning device remained Mr. Dewdney's secret. Mr. William Joynson, of the famous paper works at S. Mary Cray, in Kent, had been trying, without much success, to produce a glazed paper. And it was only after long-continued experiment, involving great expense, that he at length succeeded in discovering the hidden mystery of the Hele process.

Since then great strides have been made. Dewdney's little rollers, which are still in use at Hele, are to the fine steel calendered cylinders of to-day what George Stephenson's 'Rocket' is to the latest locomotive turned out from the Swindon workshops. The paper which Mr. Dewdney produced could not be placed in competition with the paper of to-day. But his invention was an important step forward. And he was the first to make that step. Nor was this by any means the only permanent service which he rendered to the art of paper-making. It was said that few, if any, of his contemporaries made larger or more varied contributions

to its advancement. And certain it is that under him Hele Mills began to take a leading position in the production of paper.

It was to Hele Mills that the order was given for the paper used in the catalogues of the Great Exhibition of of 1851. And it was to John Dewdney that the commissioners awarded the prize medal "for the excellence of his writing papers, and the permanent dye of his blue papers."

Among the competitors on this occasion was Mr. William Joynson, of S. Mary Cray, to whom also a medal was given for some other merits in his papers. The owner of the Kent works knew his business too well not to recognise the supreme advantage of the exceptionally good water which Hele Mills enjoyed. Early in 1852 he acquired an option to purchase them, and under this option he bought them in the following year for his son-in-law, Mr. Charles Robert Collins.

Mr. Collins discontinued the manufacture of hand-made paper, and in place of the two machines thitherto in use, erected one new machine which was admittedly the finest to be found in England. He also built Strathculm, and supplied it with water and gas from the mill.

But if the westward course of Kent's influence on the Hele Mills was to begin with Mr. Collins, it did not end in him. In 1873 Mr. Collins took into partnership a young man, who, having graduated B.A. at the university of London, had been connected with the S. Mary Cray paper works since 1862. This was Mr. Thomas Henry Hepburn. Thenceforth the name of the firm was C. R. Collins & Co. On Mr. Collins' retirement in 1883, Mr. Hepburn became sole proprietor of the mill. In 1892 he transferred it to its present owners, the Hele Paper Company, Limited, a private company, of which he is chairman. Since then the works have been greatly extended. In fact, nothing has been left undone to keep them in the forefront of the industry. In 1891

electricity was installed. At first it was used only for lighting; but in 1901 a new house was erected for the purpose of generating it on a larger scale, and since then it has been employed to distribute power throughout the mill. In 1899 a new building was erected for a 400 h.p. steam-engine, with room for another engine of 250 h.p., which was installed in 1908. In 1903 was built the 'salle,'[1] a room 110 ft. by 64 ft., used for sorting paper. In 1905 an air-drying house was added, containing machinery for the production of higher class

Hele Mills, 1907

paper; and in 1908 a house containing pumps and filters, filtering 30,000 gallons of water an hour.

It was at Hele Mills that the paper was made for postcards from the date of their first issue in the United Kingdom, on the 1st of October, 1870, and for wrappers bearing embossed stamps, which made their appearance in the same year. And the contract for these cards was regularly renewed without a break until June, 1883, when it was wrested from this country by the competi-

[1] The French term 'salle' is applied in the south of England to what is called in the north a 'finishing room.'

tion of German manufacturers. The wrappers were continuously manufactured here until 1891.

The material used at Hele was at first entirely rags, and it is still mainly the same. But from about 1860 rags were partly replaced by esparto grass, which in its turn has gradually given way since 1880 to wood fibre.

A few figures will shew the growth of the business since it left the hands of I. & I. Dewdney. The output of paper was then about four tons a week. It is now thirty-five tons a week, giving employment to 225 hands. It is to the Hele Paper Company, Limited, more than to any other industrial institution, that Bradninch owes its present comfort and growing prosperity.

The reader has in his hands a specimen of the work of the company to-day. This book is printed on paper made at Hele wholly from rags.

Other Industries

In addition to these, the principal industries of Bradninch, the manufacture of boots and shoes held a foremost place. Indeed, the cordwainers seem to have been the only body of tradesmen who were strong enough to form a guild.[1] But frequent mention is made of soap-boilers, fellmongers, tanners, and brewers as being employers of labour here.

Coal

It appears to have been supposed from a comparatively early date that coal-measures underlie the manor of Bradninch. In the eighteenth century experts from various English collieries, as well as from Wales and Scotland, confirmed the local belief. The question had been put to the test of serious experiment some time before Simpson made his survey in 1788. Borings were made. A shaft was sunk in 'furze brake'

[1] See above, pp. 204, 289.

near Tedbridge, but nothing came of it. Simpson says:—

> "It is exceedingly difficult to find coal in a maiden country, even when it may abound, the depth at which it lies is so very uncertain. . . . Nothing has been made of the coal here. They were unsuccessful in the grand attempt, and have not tried since. From the opinion of those concerned in other collieries, I do not think they were quite justified in condemning the country."

And he says in a letter written on the 12th of September, 1788:—

> "I fancy the coal is rather deep."

WORTHIES OF BRADNINCH

Edmund Hooper

On account of his connection in childhood with the town, we are entitled to number amongst its worthies one who afterwards rose to eminence in the musical world. Edmund Hooper, born at Halberton about the middle of the sixteenth century, spent his earlier years under the care of his uncle John Hooper, rector of Bradninch from 1555 to 1561. From the rectory he probably went every day to school at 'College' to be taught by Master John Multer, the pensioned chantry priest, who no doubt kept on his school after the chantry was suppressed. At a later date, probably when his uncle's incumbency came to a close in 1561, he was sent by sir James Dyer to school at Greenwich. Hooper joined the choir of Westminster Abbey about 1581. He was appointed 'master of the children' on 3rd December, 1588. and he became shortly afterwards organist of the Abbey. He was admitted a gentleman of the Chapel Royal on 1st March, 1603. He died on the 14th July, 1621, and was buried in the abbey cloisters. His grandson William, 'petti-cannon of Westminster,' was probably the Hooper who found a seat for Samuel Pepys in the choir on the

29th December, 1661, when he 'sang with them at their service.' Hooper was a voluminous composer of church music of high merit.

Sainthill

From the days of queen Elizabeth the Sainthills take the foremost place among the magnates of Bradninch. Though the family was of Norman origin, little seems to be known of it in earlier times. The civil wars of the seventeenth century brought the Sainthill of that day to the front. He is known as 'the cavalier.' The following sketch of him was found among other MSS. at Bradninch House:—[1]

> "Peter Sainthill was born 1593, and was educated at the Free Grammar School at Tiverton, and one of the first scholars on that foundation: he was an accomplished gentleman, and a good scholar; of a courteous and affable disposition; charitable, and of such unaffected simplicity of manners, that he secured the esteem of all, and gained universal confidence by his integrity, both in public and private life. He was a pattern of loyalty and attachment to his King, and being possessed of large property, he lent liberally[2] to supply the Royal necessities during the arduous contest between Charles and the Parliament; and when the King headed his army in the West, and the troops were marching from Honiton to Tiverton in the year 1644, he entertained his Sovereign at Bradninch House a day and a night,[3] and the following morning

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[1] *Olla Podrida*, by RICHARD SAINTHILL, 1844.

[2] The cavalier was a man of considerable substance, possessing estates not only in different parts of Devonshire, but in Yorkshire, Dorsetshire and Warwickshire as well. Though far from wealthy after modern standards, he was able to lend valuable support to his sovereign in the day of his need. "He advanced £2000 to the late King to bring his army out of Cornwall."—*State Papers, Domestic*, 1662.

[3] The precise date was Saturday, the 27th of July, 1644. "This Satterday, 27 July, his Majesty went to see Prince Maurice his army, Seven myles nearer Plymouth. His troops mett him on the way as he came back, and wayted on him to his quarters at Mr. St. Hill's house, justice of the peace at Brodnedge."—SYMM'S *Diary*, p. 39.

attended him on his route to Exeter. He was Recorder of this Borough, and Deputy Steward of this Manor; and in the years 1640 and 1641 was elected Member of Parliament (together with Sir Peter Balle, his kinsman) for the borough of Tiverton, which he continued to represent till the memorable year 1646, when, to avoid the persecution of his enemies, and save his life, he sought an asylum in Italy.

"On entering Parliament, Mr. Sainthill inclined to the popular side, but as soon as an ordnance was passed for raising an army against the Crown, and abolishing episcopacy, he threw all his interest in support of the King, and was one of the 118 members that sat in the Parliament of Oxford, convened by Charles in January, 1643; and, in conjunction with the Lords and other Commoners, he signed the letter to the Earl of Essex on the 27th of that month; and, in consequence, the Parliament in their propositions for peace to Charles Nov. 23, 1644, require that Peter Sainthill, Esq. (among others) be removed from Court, and His Majesty's Councils, be rendered incapable of ever holding office, and that one full-third part upon full value of his estates be employed for the payment of the public debts. Mr. Sainthill also commanded the Trained Bands raised under a Commission from the King at Bradninch, and was one of the Commissioners 'for managing the King's affairs in the West.' He is mentioned by Clarendon (Vol. II, p. 639) as one of the Commissions who met the Prince of Wales at Bridgwater, April 23, 1645, to consult on the best steps to be taken for the King's Service."

A family MS. records that after Peter's death his son Samuel tried to save some part of the family estates. The only reward that was ever given to the family for their sacrifices in the royal cause was a pardon, granted by Charles II., 30th March, 1668, to Peter Sainthill (then dead twenty years) for any offences committed against the crown. And at the same time the corporation received the right to bear with its arms the motto, *Fidelis Regi et Patriae.*

The Sainthill monument consists of two elliptical tablets of black marble, set in a carved frame of white Italian marble, surmounted by the Sainthill arms and crest. The inscriptions on the tablets are as follows:—

"To the Memory of
PETER SAINTHILL, ESQ:
Well Known in this place
for his Piety, Charity, & Justice
Sonne of PETER SAINTHILL ESQ:
and Grandsonne of
Peter Sainthill
Esq:
all Inhabitants of this Ancient
Borough
(the two last lying in the vault under the Communion Table in this
Chancil)
who, having served K. Charles
the 1st in Honourable Charges, both civil
& military, according to the obligation of
his oath, to Reserue himself for more
successfull service to his KING and
Country, in the yeare 1646 withdrew
into Italy,[1] to his Brother, ROBERT SAINTHILL
ESQ: then Agent with the greate Duke of
Tuscany from K. Charles the 1st, where
having spent the remainder of his life
in the exercise of vertue and Devotion
& lamenting the miseries civil warre
had brought upon his country, He
resigned his spirit to God who
gaue it in the yeare of Grace
1648, & the 54th yeare of his age."

[1] In a list of persons buried at Venice is Enrica Santeil, filie de Robert, 1626.

On the other tablet is the following inscription:—

"Samuel Sainthill Esq
his son and heir
both of
his fidelity to his Prince,
and Estate, though impayr'd
& lessen'd by his father's loyalty
Dedicates this Marble, and
Desires the Memory of ye reader
for the Piety of the Act wch he
caus'd to be don in the yeare
of Grace, 1679.

Cætera memorent Posteri.

The aboue Mention'd saml Sainthill
Esqr who Erected this Monument
lyes also Buried under ye Commu:on
table of this Church he Departed
this life ye 14th of Novem^r. 1708
in ye 83rd yeare of his age."

By the death of Samuel Sainthill the direct male line of this branch of the family became extinct. His cousin, John Sainthill of Topsham, being the nearest male relative, was expected to be his heir. But the old man left his property to the son of his sister Dorothy, Edward Yarde of Tresbeare, who thereupon took the name of Sainthill. This gentleman married when seventy-one years of age, and died in his ninety-fifth year, leaving one son, Edward, whose daughter and heiress, Elizabeth Sainthill, married rear-admiral Pearse, by whom she had a son, George Pearse.

SHORT PEDIGREE OF SAINTHILL OF BRADNINCH.[1]

I. Robert (or Richard) Sainthill (*b.* 1470, *d.* 1540), of Sainthill, in the parish of Kentisbeare, *m.* Joanna, dau. of Richard Mayne, of Exeter, and had issue one s. :—

Peter, II.

II. Peter Sainthill (*d.* 1571), of Bradninch, *m.* 1st, Katharine (*o. s. p.*), dau. and co-h. of Sir Humphrey Browne, Kt. He *m.* 2nd (before 1565), Juliana (*bur.* here 12 Aug., 1569), dau. of William Shine, of Bradley, co. Berks, relict of Alexander Writhington, and had issue, one s. and one dau. :—

1. Peter, III.

1'. Mary Sainthill, *m.* (after 1570) Henry Martyn, of Steeple Morden, Camb.

III. Peter Sainthill (*bapt.* here 4 Oct., 1561, *bur.* here 31 July, 1618), of Bradninch, *m.* (before 1590) Elizabeth (*bur.* here 14th Oct., 1613), dau. of Thomas Martyn, of Steeple Morden, Camb., LL.D., and had issue, four ss. and four daus. :—

1. Peter, IV.

2. Humphrey Sainthill (*b.* 1597, *d.* 1629), rector of Zeal Monachorum, *m.* 1st (*m. l.* 15 Dec., 1623) Judith Page, of Silverton. He *m.* 2nd (*m. l.* 5 Aug., 1625) Mary Weeks, of Zeal Monachorum.

3. Thomas Sainthill (*b.* 1600, *d.* prob. soon after 1620).

4. Robert Sainthill (*b.* 1604, *d.* 1664?), Agent to the Grand Duke of Tuscany.

1'. Elizabeth Sainthill (*d.* before 1 March, 1657/8), *m.* (*m. l.* 14 Sept. 1614) Walter Veysie, vicar of Milverton, Somerset.

2'. Barbara Sainthill, *m.* 1st — Peake. She *m.* 2nd (26 Oct., 1619, *m. l.* 23 Oct., 1619) Peter Bankes, curate of Bradninch, admitted rector of Zeal Monachorum, Jan., 1629/30.

3'. Julian Sainthill (*b.* 1594), *m.* Peter Burye, *clericus.*

4'. Mary Sainthill, *o. coel.*

[1] For the arms, see p. 282.

IV. Peter Sainthill (*bapt.* here, 8 July, 1593, *d.* at Leghorn, 12 Aug., 1648), *m.* (*m. l.* 12 May, 1614) Dorothy (*bur.* here, 9 Nov., 1663), dau. and h. of Robert and Mary Parker, of Foldhay, Zeal Monachorum, and had issue, four ss. and six daus. :—

1. Peter Sainthill, *b.* 1618, *o. inj.*
2. Samuel Sainthill (*b.* 23 July, 1626, *bapt.* here, 30 July, 1626, *o. s. p.* 7 Nov., 1708, *bur.* here, 20 Nov., 1708).
3. Peter Sainthill (*b.* 15 Oct., 1631, *bapt.* here, 20 Oct., 1631, *d.* prob. between 1644 and 1649).
4. Robert Sainthill (*bapt.* here, 6 Nov., 1636, *d.* between 14 and 20 May, 1664).

1′. Elizabeth Sainthill, living 1620.

2′. Dorothy, V.

3′. Mary Sainthill (*d.* before 25 June, 1660), *m.* John Hancock (*b.* 1625, *d.* Aug., 1660).

4′. Urith Sainthill (*bapt.* here, 18 April, 1624, *bur.* here, 24 June, 1630).

5′. Grace Sainthill (*b.* before 1628, *d.* between 1644 and 1649).

6′. Rebecca Sainthill (*bapt.* here, 23 Aug., 1634), living in 1670.

V. Dorothy Sainthill (*b.* 22 June, 1617, *bapt.* here, 29 June, 1617, *bur.* here, 9 Nov., 1663), *m.* (*m. l.* 22 Dec., 1636), Thomas Yarde (will dated 16 Jan, 1656, proved 20 April, 1657), of Treasurer's Bere, or Treasbere, and had issue, four ss. and four daus. :—

1. Edward, VI.

2, 3, 4. Samuel, Peter, and another son.

1′, 2′, 3′, 4′. Amy (living 2 Dec., 1665), and three other daus.

VI. Edward Yarde (*b.* 1637, *d.* 1732), who assumed the name of Sainthill, *m.* 1708, Margaret (*d.* 1714). dau. of Hugh Stafford, of Pynes, and had issue, one s. :—

1. Edward, VII.

VII. Edward Sainthill (*bapt.* here, 4 May, 1709, *bur.* here, 28 Feb., 1782), *m.* 1st (*cir.* 1726), Frances, dau. of Sir Walter Yonge, of Escot, and had issue, two daus. :—

1′. Gwen Sainthill, *o. coel. bur.* here, 7 April, 1749.

2′. Jane Sainthill, *b.* 1733, *d.* 10 June, 1819.

Edward Sainthill *m.* 2nd, Elizabeth, dau. of — Lindsey, and had issue, two ss. and one dau. :—

1. Edward Sainthill, *o. s. p.* 1794.
2. Samuel Sainthill, *o. s. p.* 1798.

1′. Elizabeth Margaret, VIII.

VIII. Elizabeth Margaret Sainthill (*bapt.* here, 1 July, 1764, and "received into church" 19 July, 1764, *d.* here 27 March, 1843), *m.* Thomas Pearse (*d.* here, 10 April, 1830), Rear-Admiral,[1] and had issue, four ss. and three daus :—

1. Thomas Pease, *o. s. p.* 1829.
2. George, IX.
3. Edward Pearse, *m.* —
4. John Pearse, *o. inf.*

1′, 2′, 3′. Jane Pearse, Elizabeth Pearse, Mary Pearse.

IX. George Pearse (*b.* 1798, *bur.* here 21 Feb., 1861), *m.* 3 May, 1827, Raby Williams (*d.* 1857), dau. of Dr. Kellett Hewitt.

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[1] Admiral Pearse had seen some service. As a very young officer he was attached to the *Venerable*, the flagship of Lord Duncan, and was engaged in the fierce battle fought off the village of Camperdown, against the Dutch, under de Winter, on the 11th of October, 1797, when nine ships of the line were taken or destroyed. He was a lieutenant on board the *Barfleur* at the memorable action on the 12th of April, 1782, when Rodney saved the West Indies by defeating the Count de Grasse. The *Barfleur*, though a comparatively small vessel, gallantly attacked the *Ville de Paris*, the largest ship of her day. When the superior weight of the enemy's guns was beginning to tell on the gallant little *Barfleur*, the *Canada* very opportunely came to her relief, and before long the huge French man-of-war, which was supposed to be invincible, was forced to strike her colours. Lieutenant Pearse was a happy man when he found himself commanded to convey the great prize to England. Next day the orders were countermanded, and Pearse was heavy of heart. The *Ville de Paris* set sail for England without him. She was never heard of more, and the disappointed young officer lived to tell the tale.

Robert Shapcote

Robert Shapcote (or Shapcott), appointed recorder of Bradninch in 1647, was M.P. for Tiverton in the Long Parliament. He was elected in 1646, in the room of George Hartnoll, royalist. Being in favour of the monarchy, he was excluded from the house of commons by the expurgation called 'Pride's Purge' on the 6th of December, 1648. He was re-elected to each of the Cromwellian parliaments of 1654, 1656, and 1659. He was a member of general Monk's 'Free Parliament' of April, 1660. In 1655 he was recorder of Tiverton, and in 1659 is described as colonel Shapcote. He is not mentioned in the Shapcote pedigree. He was, perhaps, a son of Robert Shapcote, second son of John Shapcote (p. m. taken 23 Elizabeth), which Robert Shapcote is said to have left issue.

John, Earl of Bath

The reverend prebendary Roger Granville, sub-dean of Exeter, who has in manuscript a life, in three volumes, of his distinguished ancestor, John, earl of Bath, recorder of Bradninch, 1685-90, has most kindly written for me the short graphic sketch which follows:—

> "John Granville, Earl of Bath, was the eldest surviving son of the celebrated Sir Bevill Grenvile of Stowe, the Bayard of the West. He was born 29 August, 1628, and at his baptism Sir John Eliot, the patriot, stood as his godfather, and gave him his Christian name. He was entered as a gentleman commoner at Gloucester Hall, Oxford, the year before the civil war broke out; but when Oxford became the seat of the Royalist party, and studies were no longer possible, he returned to Stowe to complete his education under the tuition of Dr. Cox, canon residentiary of Exeter. After the battle of Stratton (16 May, 1643), which was fought close to Stowe, he obtained permission to join his father's victorious army, and though barely fifteen years of age received a commission in it. At the next battle, Lansdown, near Bath (5 July), Sir Bevill was mortally wounded, and young Jack, who had followed him close, mounted his horse and led the troops himself,

and after a severe charge succeeded in defeating the Parliamentary troops, and winning another signal victory. He continued with the Royalist troops when they were attacked at Devizes (July 11-13), and on the 18th joined Prince Rupert's army and took part in the siege of Bristol, July 26th. King Charles, having to come to Bristol to settle an angry dispute between the Prince and the Marquis of Hertford, sent for young Jack Grenvile and knighted him in recognition of his conspicuous bravery at Lansdown (3 August). The King was accompanied by the Prince of Wales, who was a few months younger than Grenvile, and from this time commenced a strong attachment between the lads, which continued throughout life. Sir John accompanied Prince Rupert to the West, and took part in the siege of Exeter, Dartmouth, and Plymouth. At the latter town he appears to have left Prince Rupert and to have served under his uncle, Sir Richard Grenvile, who was conducting that siege; but after the arrival of the King and the defeat of Lord Essex in Cornwall, he left his uncle and served under Prince Maurice. At the second battle of Newbury (October 27th) he was in the thickest of the fight, and having received severe wounds in various parts of his body, was at last felled to the ground and left for dead. After the battle he was discovered alive but still unconscious, and conveyed to Donnington Castle, where he was attended by the Prince's own surgeon, and as soon as possible was sent home to Stowe, to be nursed to health again by his mother. On his recovery he was raised to the rank of Brigadier of Foot and given the command of six regiments. The young Prince of Wales at this time was sent into the West to compose, by means of his council, the quarrels and rivalries which were already showing themselves amongst the Royalist leaders, and he obtained the King's consent to the appointment of his friend Sir John Grenvile as his Gentleman of the Bedchamber, and Grenvile remained with the Prince in that capacity till the Parliamentarians drove them to seek refuge in the Scilly Islands and Jersey, and afterwards he escaped with him to France and Holland.

"On 8 Dec., 1648, Sir John was appointed Governor of the Scilly Islands, which had revolted from the Parliament and become the last rallying point of the Royalists. He had been there barely three weeks when tidings reached him of the execution of the King (30 Jan., 1649). With passionate indignation he at once proclaimed King Charles II. (the first proclamation on English soil), and then proceeded to fortify the islands as best he could with

about 800 soldiers, and officers numerous enough to head an army. He joined Sir George Carteret from Jersey, and Prince Rupert from Kinsale, in Ireland, in carrying on a guerilla warfare against the trade of the English Republic. Whatever sailed to or from England or lay off its coasts was deemed fair spoil, and trade was at a complete standstill in consequence of these Royalist privateers.

"At length decisive steps to put an end to Sir John's maraudings were taken, and on 15 March, 1651, Admiral Blake was sent to seize the islands for the Parliament once more, and after two months' stout resistance Sir John was compelled to capitulate, but on terms so exceptionally favourable to the Royalists that Parliament at first refused to ratify the conditions; but Blake, who was a man of honour, insisted on making good what he had signed on, and threatened to throw up his commission. By the Articles of Agreement Sir John had permission to return to the King, but he decided he could best serve the royal cause by remaining in England, and disarming suspicion by submissive conduct, and on 11 July, 1651, by an Order of Parliament the Council of State granted him leave to pass up and down in England provided that he did nothing which was prejudicial to the welfare of the Commonwealth. He was a member of 'the Sealed Knot,' which secretly planned those various risings which from time to time occurred in the King's favour during the next few years, but which seemed doomed always to fail.

"But Grenvile was one of the earliest to realise that the truest hope of the restoration of the monarchy lay in George Monk, whom they regarded as still loyal at heart, though bound by obligations to Cromwell which would keep him faithful to the Protector so long as he lived. The death of Cromwell (3 Sept., 1658) accordingly raised the hopes of the Royalists, and the following December Grenvile was authorised to open communications with Monk. Monk's mother and Sir John's were half-sisters, being the daughters of Sir George Smythe, of Madford, Exeter, by different wives, and Sir John had already paved the way by appointing Monk's brother Nicholas to the rich family living of Kilkhampton, in which parish Stowe was situate, on condition that 'if he should ever happen to have business with cousin George up in Scotland, perhaps Nicholas would not mind making himself useful.' After the death of Cromwell and the abdication of his son Richard, Monk came to London to S. James's Palace, where Grenvile, in spite of his malignancy, had access on the ground of his relationship, and having at last gained a

secret interview with the General, after convincing him of his prudence and secrecy, he presented a letter from the King to Monk, and his own commission to treat with him. From that moment Monk espoused Charles II.'s cause, and despatched his cousin to him with assurances of his loyal support. The grateful King received him with open arms, and caused at once a patent for an Earldom, with an assured income of £3,000 a year, to be drawn up, and promised to pay both his and his father's debts contracted in the royal cause, and also to bestow upon him the lucrative post of Groom of the Stole, in addition to the position of first Gentleman of the Bedchamber, which he had held for many years.

"When at last things were ripe, Sir John, acting under Monk's direction, appeared in Parliament with letters from the King, 28 April, 1660, and a vote in favour of his restoration having been carried with enthusiasm, Sir John Grenvile received a vote of thanks for the signal services he had performed in the matter, and a sum of £500 to buy a jewel in commemoration of this auspicious result.

"Thus pointed out to his country as the principal instrument of the restoration of the monarchy, Sir John was quickly rewarded with such honours as his services justly claimed; and he was first given, in June, 1660, a grant of the office of 'Steward of the Duchy of Cornwall and of the borough of Bradninch, and of the castles and other offices belonging to the said Duchy,' Lord Warden of the Stannaries and Lord Lieutenant of Cornwall. The Earldom and office of Groom of the Stole, and the monies promised him at Breda, were confirmed to him, and on 20 April, 1661, he was created Baron Granville of Kilkhampton and Bideford, Viscount Granville of Lansdown, and Earl of Bath, and three days afterwards he was granted permission to use the additional titles of Earl of Corbeil, Lord of Thorigny and Granville, which his Norman ancestors had borne. From this time the spelling of the family name reverted to the original form derived from the Norman seigneury, Granville instead of Grenvile, Greynvile, Graynfyld, or numerous other forms of phonetic spelling which had been in vogue in previous centuries.

"The Earl of Bath was also appointed Governor of the Citadel of Plymouth, the present Citadel was built by him, and his arms appear under the Royal Arms over the gateway.

"The King continued to retain the greatest affection and friendship for Lord Bath until his death, 6 Feb., 1685, and when he breathed his last, it was he and Lord Feversham,

the Captain of the Guard, who were the only two officers of State present, and who witnessed his reception into the Church of Rome, and the administration of the last Sacraments by Father Huddlestone, whom the Duke of York had secretly smuggled into the room. Le Neve tells us that a little before he died Charles affectionately commended Lord Bath to the Duke, desiring him to consider him not so much a servant as a friend.

"Although he mixed so constantly with the licentious court, Bath's private character was, according to all accounts, strict and moral, and he retained the love and devotion of his wife, as their letters severally testify; and though he was called upon to witness the King's reception into the Church of Rome, Bath himself was a strong protestant—so strong that on James II.'s accession to the throne he at once fell into disfavour, and the King endeavoured to oust him from several of his offices, but without success, and Bath, so long as he conscientiously could, remained unshaken in his loyalty to the King. He even assisted him in packing the parliament the King was at last obliged to summon with those favourable to his views with regard to raising money. The election of the members was taken out of the hands of the inhabitants of boroughs, and restricted to the members of the corporations, and by the issue of new Charters none were admitted as members except those who would be acceptable at court. It was at this time that Lord Bath got himself appointed Recorder of the various boroughs where he had influence, so that he might have the nomination of the mayors and corporations, and influence them to vote in favour of his own relations and friends as members to represent them in Parliament. Mr. W. P. Courtney, in his *Parliamentary History of Cornwall*, writes:—'Lord Bath, the head of the House of Granville, a race always active on behalf of Tory principles, and always steeped in the mysteries of borough-mongering, exerted himself zealously on behalf of his new King. It was reported that he carried with him into Cornwall no fewer than fifteen Charters—a proceeding which earned him the title of "Prince Elector," and it is certain that most of the boroughs were induced to surrender their ancient grants, and to accept others more easily employed in support of arbitrary government.'

"But when James attacked the Church of England and endeavoured to get parliament to confirm the Declaration of Indulgence, ordering the various lord-lieutenants to furnish him with a list of roman catholics and dissenters suitable to be members of parliament, and offering tempting

bribes to secure the election of such men, Lord Bath was alienated from him, and declined to act. On the arrival of William of Orange he was at first undecided what action to take, but finally, as Governor of Plymouth, he sided with the Prince, and seizing the roman catholic officers in Plymouth Citadel, welcomed the Dutch fleet into Plymouth harbour, and also seized Jersey and disarmed the Papists there.

"He was in great favour at first with the new King, but feeling old age coming on him he retired from most of his positions, and died in London, in his house at S. James's, 22 August, 1701, aged 73 all but a week, and was buried at Kilkhampton."

Daniel Boone

Though not born here, Daniel Boone, the pioneer of Kentucky, must find a place in any list of notabilities connected with the town. His latest biographer says of him: "Undoubtedly, of all the men who took part in the early winning of the West, none played so conspicuous a *rôle* as Boone, or a *rôle* of such extensive usefulness." His father, Squire Boone,[1] was the son of George Boone, a blacksmith and weaver of Bradninch, who, about the year 1713 or 1714, took his family to Philadelphia. The life of a Pennsylvanian backwoodsman in those days was a life of many hardships and few comforts. But the arms of the young Bradninch blacksmith, then about eighteen years of age,[2] were strong, and his heart courageous.

[1] The American writer of the curiously interesting biography of Daniel Boone is under a mistake in supposing that his father, Squire Boone, was 'bred a quaker.' Nor is there any ground for the suggestion that the family was subject to religious persecution in the town of his birth. In George Boone's lifetime the quakers had a place of worship in Bradninch. Yet his three sons and three daughters—presumably all his children—were christened in church. The baptism of his fourth child and second son is entered in our register for the year 1696 in these terms:—

"Squire ye son of George Boone baptized December ye 25th."

Squire, which strikes the American writer as 'an odd name,' is a surname found in our registers continuously since the beginning of the seventeenth century.

[2] Squire Boone died in 1743.

And Squire soon found himself able to buy a farm of his own in Berks county, and to marry. His sixth child was Daniel, born on the 2nd November, 1734. The sturdy boy grew up with very scanty schooling, but with a marvellous knowledge of the life of the woods. He became an unerring shot, a mighty hunter, and an expert woodsman, and his knowledge of the habits of his Indian neighbours stood him in good stead in the grim years of Indian warfare which were before him.

His services to his country began in the bitter struggle of the French and Indian war, that colossal conflict which definitely eliminated France as a factor in new world colonization. His first military training was with general Braddock's ill-fated force, which was sent in 1755 to uphold the sovereignty of England. Impelled by the instinct which is so strong in the Anglo-Saxon race to push ever further and further into unsettled lands, Boone gradually led his own family and friends nearer to the magnificent fertile country which lay beyond the Alleghany mountains. In the frequent raids made by the Indians upon these small plantations of English colonists, he exhibited an inborn faculty of leadership. And his fame was so well established that in 1775 he was acknowledged to be the one man who could be trusted to take the lead in the scheme for procuring the organized settlement of the interior of Kentucky. He undertook to cleave a road through the intervening wilderness, and to select a site for the seat of government. He certainly did not foresee the important place that his rugged highway was to hold in the territorial expansion of the American people, nor the fame that would accrue to its builder. Indifferent to fame, and burning to achieve the 'increasing purpose' which had allured him from his earliest years, he and his little band of road-makers drove bravely on through the wild, until the great 'Wilderness Road,' two hundred miles long, reached the border settlements. The white man had come to take possession of Kentucky. A

fortified station was built at the end of the road, designed to be the capital of the new province of Transylvania, and was fittingly named Boonesborough.

There is a picturesque story of how Boone, having been captured by the Shawnee Indians, so won their affection that they 'adopted' him into the tribe. The ceremony is described as curious, thorough, and painful. The hair is first plucked out by a tedious and unpleasant operation, leaving a tuft on the crown for the scalp-lock, which is cut and dressed up with feathers. The candidate is then thoroughly washed and scrubbed in the river, 'to take all his white blood out'; and after a fine speech from the chief, pointing out the honour conferred upon him, his head and face are painted and decorated in the most fashionable style, and the ceremony concludes with a protracted feast. Boone received the name of 'Big Turtle.' But, in spite of all the glory, he merely bided his time, and after some months' captivity he managed to effect his escape.

Unlettered, but of strong native intelligence, simple honesty, courage, and coolness, Daniel Boone has become the type of his class. He was several times elected to the Virginia assembly, and a bill for improving the breed of horses, which he brought forward, laid the foundation of the future fame of Kentucky as the land of fine horses. He died on the 21st September, 1820. Twenty-five years afterwards, "in response to a request from the Kentucky legislature, the people of Missouri consented to allow the removal of both Boone and his wife for re-interment in the State so immeasurably indebted to their brave pioneering." His grave in the cemetery at Frankfort, Kentucky, is marked by a fine monument. And to this day his name remains green in the hearts of his American fellow-countrymen. With little advantage in life, without wealth, without education, without friends, he played no small part in the advancement of the new-world civilization, and he played it manfully and well. And the fact that such an

one drew his parentage from a townsman of Bradninch reflects honour upon the home of his family.

Henry Matthews

The name of Henry Matthews has frequently been mentioned in the foregoing pages, and often in such connections as to reveal very plainly some traits in his character. But he was so truly of the salt of the earth that something more must be said of him. Shortly after his death there appeared a little memoir of him from the pen of one who knew him intimately and was well qualified to appreciate his worth. From this memoir, which is now before me, I cull the following paragraph.

Henry Matthews was born at Bridge, in the parish of Broadclyst, in the year 1792. In early life he followed the calling of his father, that of a paper manufacturer. His business prospered, and in 1840 he retired, not a rich man indeed, as the world now counts riches, but with a much larger sum than his very modest personal needs required. He came to Bradninch, and settled at Duke's Villa, which he bought from William Drew of Kensham. His daily life in this home for thirty-four years was strikingly frugal, self-denying, and simple. It was very far from being a common life. It was lived upon a higher level than it is given to most men to attain. Its beauty lay in its absolute unselfishness, and in its wide range of sympathy. He had a rare power of instinctively realizing the position of others, the wants which they themselves scarcely felt, the needs which they did not know. A remarkable instance of the abiding response to this great gift has come to my knowledge lately.

My gifted and accomplished predecessor, Mr. Webster, used to take pupils at the vicarage, young men who had left school, but had not yet definitely started on the race of life. Among these were the present Mr. Fursdon of Fursdon, captain Retallack, R.N., and lord Morley. It might well be said that there could be little in common

between an old man who had passed his life in making paper, and these eager, hot-blooded youths. But the old man had not forgotten the difficulties of life, and the pain and ruin which folly and inexperience bring in their train. His heart went out to these lads, and they knew it, and a remarkable friendship subsisted between them. He drew up for them 'Twelve Rules of Life,' which one of them, at least, towards the close of a useful and honoured career, was not ashamed to acknowledge 'had a very useful influence over him.' Lady Morley treasured these sign-posts which had helped to guide her husband in the path of duty. And after his death she gave them to his sister, who she knew would treasure them for his sake. And through her kindness I am now able to print them.

THE MAYOR OF BRADNINCH'S TWELVE RULES OF HAPPINESS

I—Keep in mind that God is omnipresent, omniscient, and omnipotent.

II—Learn the Will of God by diligently studying the Bible, and conform your life to it.

III—Never do a thing which you cannot conscientiously pray God to prosper.

IV—Never do a thing that is wrong because you see others do it, be their numbers what they may.

V—Never do a thing in secret that you would be ashamed for your friends to know.

VI—Make an industrious use of time, and a proper use of money.

VII—Oblige every one you can, without reason dictates to the contrary.

VIII—Study an obliging and agreeable manner.

IX—Do not hastily form friendships, and when formed let not trifles sever them.

X—If you are of a violent temper, persevere in correcting it until you have subdued it to reason.

XI—Deserve the good wishes and opinions of your friends and neighbours by doing all that they can justly expect of you.

XII—Never allow yourself to go to extremes in anything.

Henry Matthews was four times mayor, and he signalized each term of office by making some special offering for the service of God.[1] There ran a whimsical strain through his character, which sometimes led to fantastic situations. This comes out rather strongly in the story of the strange association of the Crimean cannon and the Glastonbury chairs. The gun was the gift of the prince consort to the borough. The mayor was about to present two Glastonbury chairs to the church. He sought to teach the people he loved a lesson of devoted loyalty, at once to God and to the throne, by a double impressive ceremonial. On the 7th of October, 1858, he sent his chairs down to the station. He and the whole population formally received the gun. A procession was formed. At its head the chairs were borne aloft, and the gun was borne behind them up to its position at the guildhall. The chairs were then taken on to the church, where they were solemnly presented. What happened to the gun is best told in Mr. Webster's Spenserians on "a paneful catastrophe":—

. . . . . .

XIII.

'Twas not long after the Crimean war,
When one of John Bull's martial transports seized him,
And every country town was clamouring for
Some trophy of the foe, who long had teased him;
The gallant mayor of (I must beg once more
To name no names!) resolved, the idea pleased him,
To signalize his mayoralty by something,
Which, in a man of peace, you'll deem a rum thing.

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[1] See pp. 196, 197.

XIV.

Fired with the warlike spirit of the hour,
And jealous for his native borough's glory,
He penned a letter to the men in power,
To beg them, whether they were Whig or Tory,
To send him down from Woolwich or the Tower,
Whereby his mayoralty might live in story,
One of the cannon taken at Sebastopol,
Whose capture cost the Allies so long and vast a pull.

XV.

Having "a friend at court" (for I should state,
The manor's lord is styled the Duke of Cornwall),
He gained his object without much debate,
(A flat refusal he would scarce have borne well!)
And, in due course, his worship to elate
With such a prize, as should exalt his horn well,
By way of something like "a real astounder,"
They sent him down a six-and-thirty pounder!

XVI.

A huge great gun it was, some nine feet long,
And firmly mounted on a handsome carriage,
Inscribed with iron letters stout and strong,
Stating that it was captured from his Czarage,
Before Sebastopol, now famed in song,
And to our loyal borough given in marriage,
To have and hold, that is, in bonds cannon-ical,
Till one or both were blotted from Time's chronicle.

XVII.

Well, down it came by train, and down to meet it,
In formal state, went Mayor and Corporation;
While at their heels, in headlong haste to greet it,
Rushed the whole borough's eager population;
And crowding round, as if they meant to eat it,
They hugged and kissed it (!!) when it reached the station;
Then, giving three loud cheers for Prince and Crown,
They "buckled to," and dragged it up to town.

XVIII.

A general holiday proclaimed its coming,
And joyous peals rang from the old church-steeple,
So great a noise of fifing and of drumming
Sure ne'er was heard among that sober people.
The shouts with which they rent the air were stunning,
Police at such a time the peace could keep ill;
In short, both old and young with joy were frantic;
You might have heard them half across the Atlantic.

XIX.

Arrived at length in front of the Guildhall,
His worship slowly halted the procession;
Then, turning round, addressed them one and all
In glowing periods, on their proud possession
Of such a trophy, to record the fall
Of Russia's mightiest stronghold of oppression;
And hoped it long might stand to tell the story
Of England's might and France's sister-glory.

XX.

Loud cheering followed on the Mayor's address,
And never in this world did man feel prouder,
To think his townsmen valued his success
About the gun; but still the cheers rang louder,
When, raising his square form above the press,
He cried if any one would fetch some powder,
He'd pay the shot, no matter at how high rate,
If any venturous spirit liked to fire it.

XXI.

A fitting climax to this day's festivity
'Twas voted by the general acclamation;
But, ready as his worship was to give it, he
Observed among the crowd some hesitation.
In fact, *this* thought had damped their first activity:
That though, belonging to a sporting nation,
Fearing nor guns nor pistols; yet, confound her!
They rather funked a six-and-thirty pounder.

XXII.

At length, an aged pensioner was found,
  Who, in his younger days, had tackled Boney,
Who volunteered to let them hear her sound
  Her iron-war-notes, "con espressione!"
So, ramming home of powder many a pound,
  He seized a red-hot poker from some crony,
And, while the crowd stood mute with fear and wonder,
Bang! went the monster, with a noise like thunder.

XXIII.

Then rose from earth to sky one hideous yell,
  "Then shrieked the timid, and stood still the brave."
And chimney-pots came clattering down pell-mell,
  Enough to wake the dead within each grave.
Then female lips were heard, in accents fell,
  Screaming, as the sound reached them wave on wave,
"Ah, drat our mazed ould Mayor! Just hark, them winders!
He've smashed them all to fifty thousand flinders."

XXIV.

And true enough it was! A flash! A crash!
  A universal earthquake shook the town!
And casements right and left, with headlong dash,
  Upon the pavement fast came rattling down.
Down from the walls came pictures with a clash,
  And chimney-ornaments, worth many a crown;
While, as it smashed their crockery to bits,
It frightened seven old women into fits.

XXV.

One scene of desolation met the sight
  When the smoke lifted, and the roar had died,
Whole shop-fronts, blown to atoms by the might
  Of that explosion, yawned on every side.
Their main street's sorely ruinated plight
  The burgesses with rueful visage eyed!
Sebastopol itself, though twelve months battered,
Could scarce have been more miserably shattered.

XXVI.

Conceive our martial magistrate's dismay,
To scan the ruin which his gun had wrought!
The shattered fragments all around that lay,
As if some mighty battle had been fought!
The broken slates and glass that strewed the way:
When down in triumph first that gun he brought,
He little dreamt, in summing up his gains,
He'd have to pay—the glazier for his panes.

XXVII.

His costs for damages were something frightful;
Because, for every cracked old glass in town,
The owners, deeming such a chance delightful,
Upon his worship for repairs came down;
And many a pound he paid more than was rightful,
To satisfy their claims or clamours drown;
Protesting, as he gazed upon each bill awry,
He never more would meddle with artillery!

XXVIII.

Five hundred squares! No wonder that the Guild
Of Glaziers voted him a right good fellow;
And prayed that when the office next he filled,
He'd make that monster gun once more to bellow.
Our pensioner,[1] in long campaigning skilled,
Declared, with drink when waxing rather mellow,
That our great Duke, of whom he then most prattles,
Ne'er broke so many squares in all his battles!

XXIX.

That soul of wit and humour, the Recorder,
Who ne'er lets slip his chance to crack his jest,
No sooner heard his borough's sad disorder,
Than gravely thus his judgment he expressed:
"Since Mr. Mayor has launched within our border
This avalanche of glaziers, I suggest,
His venerable name we henceforth class
In borough records as our Mayor de glass!"

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[1] The men who fired the cannon were William Miller of Bradninch, Joseph Farrington of Cullompton, and Thomas Pepperel of Silverton.

Then came the payment of the shot:—

"7 Octr., 1858.

Expenses on Presentation of Cannon to Bradninch.

Sundry Expenses on the 7th of Oct., 1858.

Cost of 3 Hhds of Cyder at 30/-	£4	10	0
Do. of Fire Works as per a/c	5	5	0
Do. Cullompton Band, as per Agreement	2	10	0
Do. Ringing the Bells	1	0	0
„ Webber, Baker, as per Bill for Cakes	1	0	10
„ Mr. Thos. Ireland, Do. Do.		18	4
„ Mr. Haydon, Do. Do.		16	0
„ Mr. Tucker, Do. Do.		12	6
„ Mr. Sellick, Do. for Gunpowder	2	15	0
„ Mr. Thos Govier Do. for Bell		4	6
„ 3 men fireing the Cannon		11	0
„ Mr. Saml. Templeman, as per bill for tea		16	4
„ Paid Cash for Sports in the field		10	6
„ Mr. Peter Warren as per bill for tea		17	0
„ Mr. Henry Nicks for repairing Glass	2	9	0
„ Mr. Frost as per bill for printing Bills		9	6
„ Mr. Tatham, as per bill for damages etc.		6	4
„ Mr. Gillard's bill, Hele		3	4
„ Cullompton Gunner extra for Matches			6
„ Mr. Gale for Flag		2	0
„ Mr. Tuant as per bill for damages		2	7
„ Mrs. Manley Do.		5	0
	£26	5	3

The carriage on which the gun stands was provided by the prince consort, who enhanced the graciousness of his gift by sending drawings of two or three different forms of carriage to choose from. It bears a plate with the inscription:—

"Captured 1855 at Sevastopol."

Mr. Matthews died on the 27th March, 1874, aged 81, and was buried on Maundy Thursday in strict accordance with minute written directions which he had left for his executors. The grave was opened across the path leading to the priest's door, which was then the

principal entrance to the church, in order that all who enter that way might pass over his body. And from the open grave—which was not to be closed for a certain time—a message, printed in large letters on the coffin, warned his friends that their hope of enjoying "that heavenly rest which Jesus Christ is gone to prepare for you," depended on their having such lively faith in Him, and such true repentance for committed sin, as should tend to make their lives void of offence towards God and man.

He was an exemplary churchman. He ever insisted on the full observance of the Prayer Book's teaching, not as something to be done mechanically and perfunctorily, as though the repetition of any form of words, or the performance of any rite, could in themselves avail anything, but as a privilege to be exercised, a divinely appointed means to the attainment of christian character. Such lives are a blessing to the community in which they are led, and the memory of them is a precious possession. He is one of those servants of God, departed this life in His faith and fear, for whom we bless His Holy Name, beseeching Him to give us grace to follow their good example.[1]

Hon. George West

George West was born of humble parents in the parish of Kentisbeare in 1823. The family removed to Bradninch while he was still an infant. He began to work at Kensham mills when only ten years of age. He afterwards served a full apprentice's term at Hele mill. About the year 1847 he emigrated to the United States of America. Here he pursued the business to which he had been brought up, and with such success that in process of time he found himself the owner of seven paper mills, throwing out each day twenty-seven tons

[1] His numerous friends presented Mr. Matthews with his portrait on the 24th August, 1859.

of paper, and also of a large paper-bag factory, which produced 200,000,000 bags in the year. His energy, however, overflowed into other channels, such as the building of railways and other like enterprises. He became president of the first national bank at Balston Spa, in the state of New York; and in 1880 he was elected a member of the house of representatives for the 20th New York District, being looked upon as one of the most wealthy and influential members of congress.

Mindful of his early connection with Bradninch, besides erecting tombstones over the graves of his father and mother in the old church-yard, and placing a stained-glass window to their memory in the southern aisle of the parish church, he gave £100 to the church schools, and £100 to the baptist school, and later £100 for the benefit of the poor of the parish.

Sir Henry Bale

Henry Bale, the grandson of Charles Squire (*b.* in 1784, *d.* 4th February, 1826) and of Ann, his wife (*b.* in 1786, *d.* 15th December, 1840), who are buried in the churchyard here, deserves to have his name added to this list. His mother, Charlotte Drew Squire, married, in 1846, William Bale of Halberton. They sailed from London Docks in May, 1849, and did not reach Table Bay till the end of August, four months of starvation, misery, and mutiny. William Bale was, according to his son's account, a strong, sturdy, self-willed man; severe, kindly, generous, and religious; and the daughter of Bradninch was a godly woman, of a most gentle, sympathetic nature, with a love of books and a keen sense of humour.

Of these pioneer parents Henry Bale was born at Pietermaritzburg on the 12th day of January, 1854. He was educated at the high school, Pietermaritzburg, and at Exeter grammar school. In 1875 he was admitted an attorney, and in 1878 he became an advocate. His abilities speedily built up one of the best

practices at the Natal bar. He served for seven years on the council of education. In 1890 he was given a seat in the nominated legislative council. He took a prominent part in the agitation for responsible government, and when full autonomy was granted to the colony in 1893, the citizens of Pietermaritzburg elected him as their member in the first legislative assembly. He was twice sent for to form a ministry, but he declined. He served as attorney-general and minister of education from 1897 to 1901. In the latter year he was raised to the bench as chief justice of Natal, an office which he retained until his death. In June and July, 1903, during the illness of the governor, and again from January to September, 1904, he took charge of the administration of the colony. He was knighted K.C.M.G. in 1901 in recognition of the services he rendered to the imperial government as procurator-general during the war. Sir Henry Bale was a strict presbyterian, but during his terms of acting-governorship his broad-minded sympathy earned the affectionate esteem of all the creeds. He always had a kindly memory for the home of his grandparents. Of late years he has sent a Christmas gift to the vicar and to the baptist minister to be distributed among those in want, and his death on the 1st December, 1910, has deprived us of a good friend.

NOTABILIA

Spellings of the name Bradninch

A notable thing in connexion with the history of Bradninch is the great variety of ways in which its name has been written. Here is a list of seventy-nine different forms which I have met. I have arranged them, for the most part, according to the dates of their occurrence.

Braeneis, Braeneys (1223); Braelys, Breiles (1226); Bradenes, Bradneys (1227); Bradeness, Bradeneys, Braeles, Brayles, Breilles (1229); Braydnes (1244);

Bradenesh, Bradenesshe, Bradeneyse (1248); Branens (1278); Braneys (1288); Braynes (1301); Bradeneche (1302); Bradenesh (1304); Bradenheche, Bradenenche (1308); Bradenage (1310); Bradeneysh, Bradenach, Bradenessh (1313); Bradenech, Bradenache (1316); Bradeneshe (1319); Bradenynche (1322); Bradenesh (1338); Bradenych (1339); Bradenassh (1342, 1422); Bradenich Bradnich (1346); Bradenasshe (1349); Brademuth (1377); Bradenynch (1378); Bradenynge (1380); Bradenasch (1390); Bradnassh (1393); Bradenyng alias Bradenassche (1395); Bradenanche (1397); Brathenynch, Bradanynche (1398); Bradenynch (1400); Brathenynche (1416); Bradencis (1421); Bradenhenche (1437); Bradenysshe (1469); Bradnynch (1485); Bradnensshe (1544); Bradnedge, Bradeneys, Bradnidge, Bradnedg (1608); Bradninge, Bradnese (1630); Brodenedge, Brodnedge (1644); Bradgnidge, Bradnynche (1669); Bradneysham (1759); Bradinch, Bradinich (1767); Bradenese, Braneyes, Braines, Braneis, Bradness, Bradnidge, Bradwink, Bradenyng, Bradmuch, Bradimuch, Bradmist, Bradneces, Bradninch.

Court of Free Bench

As long ago as the days of queen Anne a court of free-bench was already a matter of exclusively antiquarian interest; so much so, indeed, that the *Spectator*, wishing to base one of his skits upon the custom of 'free-bench,' found it necessary to prepare his readers for it by first explaining what it was.[1] It was one of the 'customs' of our manor

> "That when a customary tenant dyeth, his relict is to enjoy the whole, or such part, of the customary tenement which her husband died possessed of, for the term or time of her widow-hood only. . . . But if she marry again, then the said tenement, or part of the said tenement, is to fall to the next life in reversion, if there be any."

But it was open to the widow to recover her lands, if she were willing to submit to a sort of scornful penance. If she would come to the court riding backwards upon a black ram, with his tail in her hand, repeating a slang and unedifying doggerel, the steward was bound to

[1] *Spectator*, No. 614, 1st November, 1714.

re-instate her. In, or about, the year 1776—some sixty-two years after the date of the *Spectator's* article—a court of free-bench was held in Bradninch. And, of all places in the town, the place chosen for the performance of this old-world act of scorn-imposed purgation was the parish church. I have this from the lips of Mrs. Mary Webb, whom I buried in 1898. She had it from her grandmother, who, when about twelve years old, herself took part in the ribald scene. Mrs. Webb further told me that her grandmother had given her a copy of what used to be a popular picture in Bradninch—the woman riding on the ram. She had kept the picture for years, because she "used to think it funny." But when her own 'maidens' were growing up, she began to regard it as mischievous, and for that reason she put it into the fire.

I was interested to find evidence in an old-world German town that this custom was of Teutonic origin. Outside a beautiful fifteenth century house in the ancient town of Goslar, in the Hartz, is a fine frieze in carved oak, gaily painted. Among the designs is an unmistakeable portraiture of the woman on the ram.[1]

Encroachments

In Bradninch, as elsewhere, there has always been a spirit that neglects to make a conscience of the discharge of duty to the community. In the matter of making encroachments upon public property for private benefit, the offender is usually one who, with a little more brains than his neighbours, has a little less conscience.

William Capra first set the bad example on this estate. In addition to the lands for which he paid geld, he held the manor of Ilkerton,[2] upon which he had entered

[1] The custom of 'free-bench' prevailed in the manor of Daccombe, belonging to the dean and chapter of Canterbury, in the parishes of Coffinswell and Torre Mohun in Devonshire, and in the manor of Cardynham, Cornwall.

[2] See above, p. 30.

without the king's writ; two houses in Exeter; half a virgate of land going with Eastleigh and Westleigh in Fremington Hundred, "which has been so kept from notice that the King has not had his geld."

Norden[1] mentions illegal appropriation of lands belonging to the manor in the sixteenth century. At the end of the eighteenth century Simpson refers to the continuance of the same system of encroachments. Later instances are the fencing in, since 1788, of the little garden[2] filched from the space where Hên street and Parsonage road meet; the closing of Charwell lane[3]; and the narrowing of Fore street after the fire of 1835/6.[4] There is another instance of still more recent date, where the strip of land on the south side of the old Exeter road bordering the highway to the west of 'bowley-field' was appropriated. At the western end of this strip of land, which filled the angle between 'pound-field'[5] and 'barns-close,' stood our ancient pound. This relic of primitive times[6] had remained long unused and in a ruinous state. In 1880 the stones were taken to build the new south porch of the church. And shortly afterwards the site of the pound was enclosed, and thrown into 'pound-field.'

Some of these irregularities, no doubt, were cloaked by some show of regularizing authority. But that circumstance does not make them any the less private appropriations of public property.

Bradninch has been fortunate in escaping the scourge of war. Yet it has more than once had experience of

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[1] See above, p. 207.
[2] See above, p. 106.
[3] See above, p. 151.
[4] See above, p. 110.
[5] The row of trees still standing marks the line of the original fence of 'pound-field.'
[6] Sir Henry Maine, in his *Early History of Institutions*, says:—"There is no more ancient institution in the country than the village pound: it is far older than the King's Bench, and probably older than the kingdom."

some of the evils which inevitably follow in its train. In the troublous days of the commonwealth bodies of men under arms were constantly quartered in this district. On the 27th of July, 1644, part of the royal army was billeted in in the town, and Charles I. slept at Bradninch House.[1] On the 17th of September the royalist troops were again here. And on Wednesday, the 15th of October, 1645, the parliamentary general, sir Thomas Fairfax, marched from Honiton to Cullompton. There he held a council of war on the same evening, and next morning, Thursday, the 16th, he despatched general Massey to lay siege to the castle of Tiverton, while he himself rode over the hill to Bradninch. Here, however, he had scarcely time to look round him when news came that Massey's force had met with a check. Accordingly, without stabling his horses even for a single night in our church, he hurried to Tiverton, where he invested the castle. And thus our loyal borough escaped his kind attentions. In March, 1646, the parliamentary army had its headquarters at Culm-john, but Fairfax seems to have come no nearer than Silverton.[2]

War's Alarms

A trained band was raised in Bradninch to fight for king and country, under the command of Peter Saint-hill, cavalier. Its uniform was buff; its arms, to say the least, various—swords, rapiers, spears, and muskets; and its discipline and drill were naturally somewhat lacking in finish.

The authorities of the town, and 'the crowd' remained faithful to the king. And if the opening of the purse-strings was in those days as true an indication of sincerity as we count it to be nowadays, there can be no question of their loyalty. For it was not only the cavalier who impoverished himself to uphold the king.

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[1] OLIVER, *Antiq.*, p. 18 note.
[2] LYSONS, p. 59.

All who were enlisted in the trained band were represented by their opponents as

> "Ruin'd for ever, past all recovery,
> From ardent zeal to serve our country."

Among the inhabitants, however, some 'roundheads' were found, who mustered strong enough to form

> "A little band of rivalry,
> With a blue flag and crooked horn,
> Which was display'd and always blown
> Whenever (they) went by one consent
> To celebrate some great event."[1]

But however real the apprehension and the actual suffering may have been in the days when king and parliament contended, it is probable that they were but a small thing when compared with the terror that seized the inhabitants of this part of the country a little more than a hundred years ago, on account of the threatened French invasion.[2] Men were called upon by act of parliament[3] to register their names, and to state which of the following several services they would be ready, if called upon, to undertake for the defence of king and country:—(1) by bearing arms as soon as the enemy should have effected a landing, or (2) by acting as pioneers, or (3) as guides, or (4) by supplying waggons and carts, or (5) by grinding flour, or (6) by baking the flour into bread for the army. Farmers were directed to enrol their names, together with a statement of the amount of live and dead stock which each possessed,

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[1] *Peter's Banquet, or The Cavalier in the Dumps*, a republican satire of 1645 or 1646, printed in *The Gentleman's Magazine*, December, 1825, and reprinted in SAINTHILL'S *Olla Podrida*, 1844, p. 300.

[2] No one now survives who remembers this threatened invasion. But there are those still among us who knew Mr. Tanner, who was then vicar of the parish.

[3] 43 George III.

in order that they might be indemnified for any losses inflicted by the enemy, or suffered through the requirements of the British forces. Local corps of volunteers were formed on all sides, and the cost of their instruction was paid out of the poor-rate by the overseers. Men were so alarmed that they could not attend to their ordinary business. Trade was at a stand-still. A rumour went abroad that the French had landed somewhere on the coast of Devon or Somerset. It was generally believed, however, that they would advance from Torbay, or from Plymouth. To warn the country of their coming—from whatever side it should take place—an elaborate system of beacon fires was devised. Great erections of dry wood, and other inflammable matter, were built on chosen heights. And each of these beacons was placed in charge of a responsible man, on the look out with a telescope, with instructions to fire it the moment he should discover any other beacon aflame. The high ground above Bradninch, on the way to the still higher point of Christ Cross, was the site of one of these signal fires belonging to this system of beacons, as its name, 'Beacon,' testifies to this day.

On one occasion a beacon was found to be alight. At once from hill to hill the signal was taken up, until in a twinkling the two counties of Devon and Somerset were in a panic. Fortunately, it proved to be a false alarm. Some mischievously curious person had fired the beacon in order to see what would happen.

Bradninch Bread Riot

In 1847 the increase in the cost of food stirred up among the poor in many places a good deal of angry feeling, which led to riotous demonstrations against bakers, millers, and corn-dealers in Exeter, Tiverton, and Cullompton.[1] Seeing the price of grain rising from day to day,

[1] SNELL'S *Chronicles of Twyford*, pp. 306-8.

those of the farmers who could afford to wait held over the produce of their husbandry in expectation of still better markets. Millers hoarded up what grain they could buy from smaller men against the days of actual famine, which they fancied they saw ahead of them. The speculators over-reached themselves. The grain was kept too long, and became so injured by rat, weevil, and other vermin, that in many cases the venture issued in actual loss. While the excitement was at its height, Ireland, the miller at Kensham, venturing one market day to Exeter, was seized by an angry crowd, which cut off the soles of his shoes, and sent him home barefoot with the fearful warning: "Thee git home! an' if thee disen't bring thicky corn wa' ee tha knext time thee komes to markit, we'ell not kut hoff tha taps[1] of thee's bats[2] again, but taak tha tap[3] hof thi ould niddick."[4]

There does not appear to have been any public outbreak of feeling among the people of Bradninch at this time. But the idea of bread rioting in the neighbouring towns took such hold of the popular imagination, that twenty years later, when the price of bread happened to rise a little, some of the young bloods of Bradninch indulged on the 5th of November, 1867, in a certain amount of horse-play, which was duly sung in mock heroics by Quick, the local rhymster, and is spoken of to this day as 'the Bradninch bread riot.' It was a noisy and destructive, but good humoured, crowd. That which most drew its fire was the window of the druggist's shop, adorned as it was by three bright globes, which cast their tinctured light far into the street. The youngsters broke a few panes of glass also in some of the bakers' windows. One sturdy supplier of the staff of life was, however, equal to the occasion. When they approached his house, intent on further mischief, he met them at the door with a loaded gun in his hand, and ordered them to disperse. Wisely believing

[1] *I.e.* soles. [2] *I.e.* boots. [3] *I.e.* top. [4] *I.e.* head.

discretion to be the better part of valour, they disbanded instanter. Conspicuous in the motley throng was a well-favoured, ingenuous youth. He was at the time paying court to the maiden whom he shortly afterwards made his wife. Whether it was with a view to typify his forlorn condition, or merely from a freak of boyish fancy, I know not. But certain it is, he was maskerading among his fellows as a ghostly skeleton. There is not much of the skeleton apparent in him now. His chest measurement to-day is fifty-two inches. And there are few in the parish for whom I have a greater regard.

'Seein' tha Devil'

"'Ave 'ee evur 'eerd tell 'ow ole gramfer Labdon was frightened wey tha devil in churchyard wan marning? U minds ole gramfer, doan't 'ee? A ole feller what use to liv up Nu Haven, an' use to keep a ole dunkey, an' was s' crippled up that 'er 'ad to walk 'bout wey tu sticks.

I wunder iv 'ee also minds ole Phul Blackmore, tha chimbley sweep, what use to live to Cullomum: a turrible feller 'ee was for tha drink, to be sure! Wall, wan day Phul 'ad cume auver yer in marning to sweep chimbleys, and 'er bides 'bout in publick 'ouse 'till 'twas 11 or 12 o'clock o' night. 'Ee suddenly minds 'ee 'ad wan or tu more chimbleys to sweep 'bout 4 o'clock next marning—one I knaus was for 'Arry Matthews, t'other for ole docter Bowden. So 'ee says to hissell, says 'ee, 'What's good gwain back Cullomum these time o' night; time get there I shall ha' to start back 'gin.' So 'ee goes in churchyard, lies down atween tu graves, puts 'is sut bag auver 'is face, an' was soon in land au drames.

'Bout dree o'clock next marning ole gramfer Labdon comes in churchyard tu cut grass fer 's ole dunkey, starts sharpenin' 'is sye way a wetstun. Blackmore wakes up, pulls sut bag from 's face (be that time 'ee was 's black 's any nigur, and o' course 'twas bit dimsey like), 'ee says, 'What's time, maester?' Ole gramfer

look down, sees these yer feller sotting up 'tween graves way such a black face, frightens ole man, that way er goes, draps 'is tu sticks, an' urns like mad 'ome, says to 'is ole duman, 'Aw, muther! muther! I've sin devil risin' out ground in churchyard!' So bad was tha ole feller, that way 'ee goes tu bed, and 'ee bides there auver seven yers."

Bradninch House

Besides the church the only building of any note in the town is Bradninch house. It was built on the site of the old rectory by the first Peter Sainthill in the year 1547. One wing only remains. The dining-room, commonly spoken of as 'Job's room,' is 36 ft. long, 24 ft. broad, and 13 ft. high. The oak panelling is extremely rich. The carving is in the Italian style, the panels relieved by flat pilasters delicately ornamented by devices of fruit, flowers, musical instruments, and cherubs. The ceiling is decorated with bold plaster designs. The spacious fire-place is surmounted by a fine carved mantel, which runs the full height of the room, representing in alto-relievo Abraham's sacrifice, Job's trials, and Jacob wrestling with the angel. The whole is supported by figures of Ceres and Bacchus. The room is entered through an inner state-porch, with a second and lower ceiling, resting upon delicately carved pillars. It is almost a replica of the well-known state-porch at Bradfield, which however is painted, while this is of polished oak.

The walls of the library are plainly panelled in oak. The mantel-piece, rising to the ceiling, is enriched with figures of Prudence, Temperance, Justice, and Fortitude. In the window are the arms of queen Elizabeth and of the Sainthill family, with the date 1562.

The balusters of the fine oak staircase are ornamented by grinning heads, and surmounted by lions and griffins rampant, holding shields in their paws. One newel bears a unicorn of more modern workmanship, supposed

Glebe belonging to the Lay Rectory of Bradninch

From a Survey of the Honor of Bradninch by Wm. Simpson, 1788

to have been placed there to commemorate the visit of king Charles in 1644.[1] The king's bedroom remained unaltered with all the old furniture in it until the death of Mr. George Pearse in 1861.

The beautiful oak carving throughout the house is maintained in excellent condition by the present occupants.

Dunmore

On the site of Dunmore house there formerly stood a residence called Burleigh house, the approach to which went through what is now the garden of Crofthayes. Dunmore house and Crofthayes were built by a son of the earl of Dunmore, the hon. Leveson Granville Keith-Murray, who came to live in Bradninch in May, 1834. After his arrival he removed the gate to where it now is, and built the stable at Crofthayes. He died at Dunmore on the 14th of January, 1835, aged sixty-five, and was buried here.

Longevity

Old Brimicombe, the clerk, whose death in July, 1902, at the age of eighty-seven, removed one of the shrewdest intellects in the place, gave me the result of his own researches as to longevity in Bradninch. One day in August, 1873, he met a lady and gentleman who had come to view Dunmore, which was then in the market. They got into conversation with him, making inquiries about the church and the healthfulness of the town. His statements seemed to surprise them, and they were inclined to think he was drawing the long bow. This rather upset the good man, and he determined to verify his assertions. When he had drawn up a list of those whom he knew to be over eighty, he sent it to the *Exeter and Plymouth Gazette.* From his letter which appeared in that paper on the 6th

[1] This description of Bradninch house is taken chiefly from a MS. in possession of Charles Maples, esq., to whom I am indebted for the use of it.

of September, 1873, I take the following:—"I found that the population of Bradninch, taken at the last census, was about 1,800, and that we have now living in this parish thirty persons, not one of whom is under eighty years of age, and whose united ages amount to 2,493 years, giving an average of about eighty-three years to each individual." And he produced an authenticated list of them.

The following list taken from the parish church register of burials gives the names and ages of thirty-six persons over ninety who were buried in the course of the nineteenth century:—

Year.	Name.	Age.
1810.	William Morrish	100
1817.	Margery Webber	93
1819.	William Voysey	93
1820.	Sarah Mortimore	90
1820.	Betty Singleton	90
1821.	Hannah Martyn	93
1822.	Elizabeth Drew	95
1826.	Mary Spurway	102
1827.	Patience Dunsford	91
1827.	John Trist	99
1827.	Elizabeth Templeman	90
1831.	Elizabeth Style	95
1832.	Elizabeth Mercer	98
1834.	Elizabeth Tree	92
1840.	John Webber	94
1843.	Thomas Tanner	90
1845.	William Ingersent	90
1847.	Thomasine Coombe	90
1847.	Betty Satchell	90
1852.	Ann Trickey	91
1852.	Henry Bowden	92
1854.	Thomas Nex	91
1859.	Sarah Dewdney	91
1867.	Agnes Ireland	93
1867.	Joan Sharland	95
1868.	Peter Sharland	93
1877.	James Griffin	90
1880.	John Norman	91
1883.	William Ingersent	91
1883.	Ann Tucker	92
1885.	Mary Luxton	95
1887.	Juliana Sharland	100
1891.	William Coppin	90
1892.	Sarah Chamberlain	92
1892.	Samuel Templeman	93
1895.	John Norman	93

These are not the only striking figures which the same register contains. For a space of more than seven months —from the 7th of June, 1908, to the 12th of January, 1909—there is no entry of the burial of a single resident. Two entries do occur; but they refer to former parishioners brought from elsewhere for interment, at the ages of seventy-eight and seventy-seven. Moreover, an analysis of burials registered from the 27th of January,

1910, to the 5th of March, 1911, seems strongly to confirm Brimicombe's view of the healthfulness of the place. Within that period there are twenty entries in all.[1] Eight of the deceased were over eighty years of age, and two others died in their eightieth year. The average age of the eight was eighty-three years and six months. And the average age of the ten—*i.e.*, of one half the number of all whose names appear in the register—was eighty-two years and seven months. The average age of fourteen out of the twenty—*i.e.*, of more than two-thirds of the whole—was seventy-nine years and four months. The average age of sixteen out of the twenty—*i.e.*, of four-fifths of the whole—was seventy-seven years. And the average age of all the twenty (among whom were two infants, one of four days, and the other of two years) was sixty-five years and seven months.

If the population of Bradninch had increased at the same rate as the population of the whole of England has increased since the 'Domesday Survey' in 1082, the number of the inhabitants would now be somewhere between 7,000 and 8,000.

Manor of Sainthill

The manor of Sainthill is in the parish of Kentisbeare. In a manuscript[2] relating to tenures in the reign of Edward II. the "manor of Sweynthull" is mentioned as "held of the abbott off Dunkenswelle." The name also appears under the forms Swenthull and Sanketyl.

Paper from Hele mills was not the only object which our parish sent to the Great Exhibition of 1851. Henry Matthews was the possessor of two things which were

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[1] One of the lives is registered as two years younger than it is proved to have been. These two years have been added for the purpose of calculating the averages.

[2] *Harl. MSS.* 6126.

unique in Bradninch—a walnut-tree planted at the coronation of king Henry VIII., and a pet sheep with six legs which he had reared. He felled the tree, and from the timber he had two bed-posts made, on which were carved that monarch's crown and the six-legged sheep. These bed-posts were sent to the Great Exhibition. They were consumed in the fire at Knowstone vicarage in January, 1890.

A Peculiar Exhibit

The avenue of trees in Millway was planted by Mr. William Matthews about the year 1832.

The chestnut tree in the churchyard was planted there in 1911, the year of the coronation of king George V., on the 10th of March, the anniversary of the marriage of king Edward VII. The tree was grown in the first year of the twentieth century from a nut which I picked up in the autumn of 1900 at the farm of Hougoumont, on the field of Waterloo. It stands fifty-one feet eight inches from the western angle of the south-western buttress of the south aisle, and sixty-one feet six inches from the north-western angle of the vestry-room. The boundary of the old churchyard ran about twenty feet to the south of it, and twenty-three feet to the west of it.[1]

The old corporation of Bradninch did not die without a determined effort being made to prolong its existence. After its doom had been pronounced, but before it had actually expired, a petition under the "Municipal Corporations Acts, 1882 and 1883," signed by a number of residents, rated at £5,368, prayed that the provisions of these acts might be

Conclusion

[1] The graves of the Lewis, Palmer, Tucker, Were, Goss, Andrews, and Coulcher families were all in the old churchyard, as appears from their dates. Brimicombe's grave was "on the fence of the new ground."

extended to the town of Bradninch, and a new charter granted to it. A resolution in favour of the charter was carried by a large majority at a public meeting. The privy council sent down the hon. T. H. Pelham, as a commissioner, to take evidence on the spot and to report. The result was that the prayer of the petition was not granted. There are still some residents in Bradninch who regret the loss of our municipal dignity. But the disinterested observer will feel that it was all gain to the town to have a complete break with the past. And undoubtedly things are better as they are.

It would not be true to say that Bradninch lagged behind the rest of the world merely because it had a mayor and corporation. But there can be no doubt that since we emerged from the limitations of our corporate life, and took our place as part of the larger world around us, we have found ourselves far more able to move with the times. In the quarter of a century of the town's new life it has achieved more, I think we may say, in the way of material prosperity than in centuries before. Indeed, it has made great strides even since I came here fourteen years ago. Let me enumerate the most striking.

The first time that I walked through Fore Street with the last mayor of the town, he told me that you could know a Bradninch man anywhere, by his habit of walking through a town in the middle of the road, a habit which he had learned from the extreme roughness of our cobble-pavements. Now we have a dry, smooth footpath from Croft Hayes to Pendennis. The vicarage, Dunmore, and Croft Hayes have been enlarged, while the general appearance of the whole town has been notably improved by the better-finished facings put upon most of the houses, and by the planting of the centenary trees down its chief street. The old King William and the houses attached, as well as two houses in Parsonage road, all formerly made of cob and covered

with thatch, have been rebuilt. Hele Mills built the Red-house; Mr. Nicks, Mr. Glover, and Mr. Partridge have all built new houses. The duchy has erected cottages in Mill-way and on the Cullompton road, and a series of picturesque cottages is rising on Hele road, and in Western-town.

Sanitary matters have received careful attention. The new reservoir at Palace Combe has been added, and the water supply modernized; and for the first time an efficient system of sewage has been provided for the whole town. Adequate protection against fire has been supplied. Oil lamps in the streets, which were lighted only on nights when the moon could not shine, have, under the impulse of Dr. Muir's enterprise, given place to electric light. In fact, there are few small towns which enjoy greater conveniences of ordinary daily life in certain directions than belong to us at the present time.

It is pleasant also to know that it is not only in material comfort that advance has been made. We are happily a long way removed from the unenviable notoriety for 'roughness' which the population retained even until the end of the eighteenth century.[1] It is little more than thirty years since Bradninch was a bye-word for its hard drinking. Through the instrumentality of the Church of England Temperance Society, and of others with a like aim, all this was changed, until the character of the place was transformed, and it became noted for the high percentage of its pledged abstainers. If that percentage has in recent years somewhat fallen off, it is chiefly because those societies have to a great extent attained their object. I do not say there is now no drinking. But drunkenness is now 'taboo' among us, and tippling is considered 'bad form.'

There has been an improvement also in manners—

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[1] See above, p. 150.

a matter of greater importance than is always recognized,

> "For manners are not idle, but the fruit
> Of loyal nature and of noble minds."

There have always been, even in the humblest homes, many whose natural courtesy and refinement of manner are beyond all praise. And the rest are steadily, I hope, coming into line. At entertainments, for instance, it is not often now that the visitor coming from another county is distressed and astonished at the rough, noisy behaviour of the younger part of the audience. Again, our Sunday-evening-parade in Western-town is no longer quite the rowdy, discreditable thing it was; it is less of a nuisance to the neighbourhood. A larger measure of self-restraint, and an effort to apply practically that grand old rule that we should do to others as we wish them to do to us, are doing quiet work among us. They are gradually raising our standard, and bringing us nearer to that higher level of daily living to which not only the spirit of christianity, but even the very growth of civilization, naturally impels us.

What is generally considered an important test of advance in character and ideal is the attendance of christian people at the Holy Communion. I would carefully guard myself against seeming to set an undue value upon mere figures. Yet I may thankfully say that this attendance shews a distinctly upward tendency, full of hope, I trust, for the future. It may be of service to make public the number of communions made at Easter since I came here:—

Year.	No. of Communicants.	Year.	No. of Communicants.
1897	126	1904	177
1898	146	1905	177
1899	106	1906	161
1900	160	1907	163
1901	162	1908	171
1902	161	1909	175
1903	161	1910	182

A VALEDICTION

We have now learned what we have been. But, as Ophelia says, we

> "Know not what we may be."

Let then the story close with a note of hopefulness, with a cheery onlook to a future which promises to the Bradninch we love wider interests, greater prosperity, and—if her people will have it so—a growing beauty in their daily lives. We have found good and ill mixed together, as it always is in the mingled yarn of the web of life. I have taken facts as I have found them. And if, in relating them as they have come to my knowledge, I may seem sometimes to have spoken the truth too bluntly, I have at least set down naught in malice. And I cannot think that my readers would pronounce the narrative of greater worth, or even more pleasing to them, if I had tried to be

> "A flattering painter, who made it his care
> To draw men as they should be, and not as they are."

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ADDENDA ET CORRIGENDA

Page 21, line 9: *for* 'some-' *read* 'sometimes.'

Page 74, inset: *for* 'Duke' *read* 'Earl.'

Page 106, in the map: *for* 'Westend Rd.' *read* 'Western Town.'

Page 123: before last line, *insert*—Some hundred years ago another token was in use. It is a brass coin of the diameter of a 50

centimes piece. O. Bradninch Arms Inn. Quick. R. Within a garland of laurel and oak leaves the figure 3. See p. 164.

Page 173, line 2: *for* 'its golden age,' *read* 'the golden age of Bradninch.'

Page 186, line 15: *for* 'mortices' *read* 'mortises.'

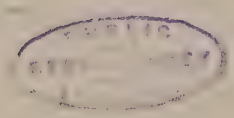
Page 190, line 4: *for* 'Levison' *read* 'Leveson.'

Page 209, line 27: *for* 'Helc Payne' *read* 'Hele Payne.'

Page 211: *add to* note 3 'See below, p. 352.'

Page 309, line 24: *for* 'lease' *read* 'work.'

Page 359: *after* last line, *insert* 'The number of Easter communicants in 1911 was 200.'



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